

OVR CONTINENT

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Now comes the glad day of the year
When Christmas bells ring loud and clear,
And children's faces shine.
Alas! what does it mean to me
On whose hearth grows no Christmas tree,
Whose children's faces seem to be
As old and sad as mine?

We sit aloft, my babes and I,
And watch the happy folk go by,
While church-bells ring afar;
And I, to while the hours for them,
Tell the old tale of Bethlehem,
And how the kings of Orient came,
Led by a single star.

I tell them how its light was shed
Above the little haloed head
That in a manger lay;
And how, by reason of His birth,
That brought good will and peace on earth,
At Christmas-time with song and mirth
The world keeps holiday.

"Do we keep holiday? do we?"
The children ask me wistfully,
And hardly knowing why—
"At least we can be glad," I say,
"That somewhere else the children may,
For His sweet sake, keep holiday,
Though ours has passed us by."

Hardly, indeed, can I explain
Why such a thought should ease my pain,
Or their loss compensate.
Lovely their little faces are,
Though hunger-wan—as flower or star,
Why should their lives be set so far
From childhood's fair estate?

When dusky shadows creep and twine
Along this attic wall of mine,
We watch the lights gleam out.
Through misty folds of lace we see
The candles on the Christmas tree,
The children dancing merrily
Its branches round about.

No part or lot have we in these,
The heavy-laden Christmas trees,
The ruddy hearth-fire's glow;
Our walls are blank, our shelves are bare,
Scanty and coarse our Christmas fare,
And at the board sits a grim Care—
The only guest we know.

Closer the children round me cling,
The wintry shadows deepening.
"Will Christmas be like this?"—
Sadly they ask me—"mother dear,
Will Christmas be like this next year?"
I turn to brush away a tear,
And answer with a kiss.

"God knows, my darlings! God knows best."
But oh, the heartache unconfessed
The while such words I say!
Does He know what is best indeed,

And leave us to our bitter need?
Ah! cruel riddle, hard to read!
Ah! merry Christmas Day!

MARY BRADLEY.



HOW KATY OPENED THE DOOR.

BY R. W. RAYMOND.

IT is not comfortable to be poor. I do not mean merely very, very poor, like the man who goes about with a hand-organ—though, by the way, judging from the quantity of pennies he gets, I shouldn't wonder if he were rich, and simply pursued his occupation because he is fond of exercise and classical music. But supposing him to be as poor as he looks, I do not mean that alone. Anybody is uncomfortably poor who owes money and can't pay it, or who really needs and desires something, but can't afford it. In this sense most people are poor very often. And there are only two remedies: one is, to have more money, which is not always easy to manage, and the other is, not to want so many things, which is also not easy, but, on the whole, more advisable.

Yet it is quite as uncomfortable and twice as absurd to feel poor when one is not poor. This is what ailed Mr. Crabbe. He had money enough, if he had only thought so. He lived as well as he knew how. If his house was rather gloomy and lonesome, it was because he chose to live alone. His wife had died many years before this story begins. His only daughter had married against his will, and he had never forgiven her—not even when she wrote begging his love and pardon, as she often did at first, or begging his help, as she once did afterwards. He had simply burned the letters without opening them, and had even forgotten the post-marks. It was now at least eight years since she had left him, and he did not know, and thought he did not care, what had become of her. All that time he had been getting rich as fast as he could. I suppose that in most cases, if a man will give up everything for it, he can get rich, but it is a fearful price to pay. Old Crabbe had not found out this truth fully. He fancied that if he wasn't quite comfortable it was because he was still poor. "How can a man be happy," he used

to grumble, "losing money every day? Such times! people pretending they can't pay their rent, and real estate going down all the while!"

Old Crabbe's business was to get money from the tenants of his houses; and his only pleasure was to take that money and buy more houses. He had been a merchant in earlier days; but he had given that up, because he thought he hated to see and speak with people. Folks talked such rubbish, he said, over the counter; and a woman shopping was enough to drive a man mad! There was some truth in that, I confess; but not sufficient to justify him in despising the world altogether. The real secret was, that having cruelly wronged his daughter, he tried to believe that everybody, particularly every woman, was somehow wronging him, or would do so at the first opportunity. At all events, he had retired from business, put his money into houses, and employed an agent to look after them, so that he need never personally meet the tenants. "They're all alike," said he; "if they can't rob me they'll bore me. What do I care for their smoky chimneys and poor kitchen ranges, and the pipes and roofs that leak, and the doors that won't shut, and the mouldy wall-paper, and the three coats of paint that everything needs, and all the rest of it?"

But, although he took so much pains (and was willing to pay an agent a moderate—very moderate—salary) to avoid having anything to do with his tenants, he really attended to the whole business. The agent was little more than a go-between, and was obliged to report to old Crabbe almost every day and take his orders. "Don't tell me their names," said the landlord, "and don't tell them my name. But don't you dare to do anything or promise anything till I give you leave!"

The agent was a jolly Irishman, who, if he could have had his own way, would have demanded no rent at all, and lent money to the tenants into the bargain. "Sure,

it's little good the money does the loike o' him," he used to mutter, as he received the monthly payments from people who looked as if they laid down with every dollar a bit of the pale flesh from their bones. But he was honest in obeying orders; and, although he gave plenty of cheering words and sympathy, he wasted none of old Crabbe's money. Indeed, he could not well have done so without being found out, for the old man used to cruise around early in the morning or late in the evening, when he thought he would not be seen, and inspect matters for himself.

The day I am now writing of was the 24th of December. The agent was just leaving Mr. Crabbe's gloomy house after making his report. He had managed to give satisfaction in every case but one, and in that one case he had obstinately insisted that the rent ought to be reduced.

"Faith, yer honor," said he, "it's too big a proice for the little ould house at all, an' it not fit to live in without new front shsteps to it, an' a power o' patchin' on the roof, an' no gas nor water, an' the furnace as good as wore out intirely. Sure the widdy 'd be after lavin' long ago av she hadn't lived there so happy with her husband—rist his sow! It's a foine man he was, an' good as gowld—barrin' the gowld. He hadn't enough o' that to hurrt him!"

"There, there!" interrupted old Crabbe; "haven't I told you I don't want to know anything about the people that live in my houses? Widows and husbands—it's all one to me. Let them pay their rent or get out!"

"Av coarse!" replied the agent. "That's what I said to the widdy—I mane the tinant—and says she, 'I think I'll have to give you the rig'lar notice.' So I thought yer honor 'd better be tould, for it's not many tinants you 'd be after gettin' for that place onnyhow; in the did of winter, too, more 's the pity." With that the agent departed, and when he had reached the street and could not be overheard by old Crabbe, he chuckled and said to himself, "That concludin' consideration was an illigant bit of logic. That 'll do the business!"

Apparently he had guessed correctly, for after he had gone old Crabbe, sitting alone in the house, began to think the matter over. He wasn't quite ready to tear down No. 142, the house to which the agent had referred, and build "flats" in the place of it. He wanted first to secure the next lot, which he did not yet own. And if the present tenants should leave, it would be difficult to find others who would take it on any terms, except those of thorough and expensive repairs. Yet to reduce rent, even to retain a good tenant, was against his principles. It is one of those things which should be done only as a last resort.

Old Crabbe looked over a big book containing columns of figures. Then he ciphered a little on a bit of paper, and found that he had some twenty thousand dollars of money to spare for new investments. Such a result ought to have made him good-natured—I am sure it would have that effect upon me—but he made a wry face over it and banged the lids of the big book together, and said it was just his luck—with decent fortune he should have had thirty thousand by the end of the year, instead of twenty.

But after venting his ill temper on a chair or two, and making a few more spiteful remarks about the world and the way it treated him, he returned to thoughts of business. Even his fits of discontent were not allowed to interfere with business. And the result of his meditations was that he put on his big slouched hat and his big shaggy overcoat, and went out to look at No. 142 for himself, and see if it was such a tumble-down place as

that agent of his pretended. It was still early in the afternoon, but a snow storm was going on at a pretty lively rate, and when old Crabbe reached the place he sought and stood on the opposite side of the street to look at No. 142, the snow had made the house as respectable as any of its neighbors. "New front steps!" muttered he. "Nonsense!" And crossed the street to look at them a little more closely. There were only two steps, and there was a hole in the first of them; but the snow had hidden the hole, as well as a very slippery spot on the sidewalk just before the steps—a slippery spot which had been carefully cultivated by wicked boys. So it came to pass that op that spot old Crabbe placed one foot (for a fraction of a second only) and into that hole went his other foot immediately, and forward went his whole body. He almost fell; but not quite, and he certainly would have banged his head violently against the front door if it had not at that instant been opened suddenly. But this is an excellent place to conclude the present chapter and leave the reader in a state of harrowing suspense. It is almost always just as the door opens that we encounter those dreadful words, "*To be continued in our next.*"

II

I HAVE observed that great authors, after bringing about a crisis like that in my last chapter, do not continue it in their next, whatever they may promise to do. They always say: "Leaving our hero in this distressing position, let us now narrate some events which occurred several years before, and which have a bearing upon our story." I am going to imitate this fashion, though in a moderat way—for I don't like to follow fashion to extremes—and the mystery of the door that opened in my last shall not be solved until I have told something about the inhabitants of No. 142, and the scenes which took place there on that same afternoon, not long before old Crabbe slipped, as aforesaid, on the front steps.

It really was not such a desperately bad house, though the agent had told the literal truth about it. But it is astonishing how long one can continue to live in a house, and be quite comfortable, too, in spite of lots of things being out of order. If you don't believe this, listen while your mother talks to your father, or your father to the landlord, about the things that really must be done this year to the plumbing and the painting and the range and the ceilings and the door-knobs; and then notice how many of them don't get done after all, and how the family goes on another year without being so very unhappy over it. No. 142 was little and old, possessed of all the ancient inconveniences, with few of the modern conveniences, except, indeed, a door-bell that was out of order, and a furnace in the cellar that made a good deal of trouble. Nevertheless, it was very cosy and pleasant under the low ceilings of the neat and tastefully-arranged rooms. Certainly so thought the sad and gentle lady who, with her little daughter, inhabited them, as, on the afternoon of the 24th of December, she looked around the pretty parlor and sighed and said, half to herself and half to the agent, "It will be hard to leave this place. I have been so happy here."

"Yes 'm," replied the agent promptly; "it's a big shame, it is: them front shsteps, an' the furnace an' all, an' a dillikit laddie like you, an' the purry gurrl."

"Ah," said the lady, "that's not the reason. The reason is that we cannot afford to have a house all to ourselves. We have not very much money, and we must be economical. When my dear husband died, three years ago, I feared that we would not be able to go on living here; but I resolved to try, for it was so hard to

give it up! And I hoped that—perhaps—somebody—a connection of ours, might assist us. But he did not—and times have grown rather worse with us."

"Moighty little good in thim connectiōns," muttered the agent, and added aloud; "but he tould ye that he regritten his inability?"

"I do not know," said the lady; "he never answered my letter."

"Oh, it's a letter is it?" said the agent. "Mebbe it'll be not directed right it was, or ye put the wrong stamp on the corner, or ye didn't stick it on firm, or ye dropped it in one o' thim desaivin' lamp-posts—sure there's lashin's o' letters goes wrong."

"No," said the lady; "I know well where he lives, and I left the letter at his door; and the servant told me that Mr. Crabbe was at home."

When the agent heard that name he gave a long whistle, in spite of his natural politeness, and immediately said he must look at the furnace. "Sure I had to git away somehow," said he to himself as he groped down the cellar stairs. "If I had staid a minute more I'd a' broke one of the tin commandments, by spakin' my moind about that ould villain. A connection o' hers, is it? Holy Moses; it's her father he is, bad luck to him!" And the kind-hearted agent went on down to the furnace, where he opened doors and shut them again, poked his head into various hot and smoky places and pretended to make a thorough examination generally; but his thoughts were busy all the time with wild plans for the relief of the widow and her child.

Meanwhile, the lady was not left alone; for in ran the loveliest little girl and sprang upon her mother's knee. I am not good at describing little girls. They all seem pretty to me. So I will mention but one point



KATY HEARD FROM THE DEPTHS—"HE'S A BROTH OF A BOY, THAT AGENT, AN' DON'T YE FORGET IT!"

about little Katy. She had a pair of great gray eyes, which she used to fix upon the person to whom she was speaking, and there was something in those eyes, something deep and transparent, which made it very hard to avoid answering any question they might ask. It seemed as if they were two still, clear pools, and must not be disturbed by careless or deceitful words. Katy's mother always told her the truth and a good deal more of it than she might be expected to understand—for she was only seven years old—but children understand more than they get credit for; and what they don't understand they may apprehend, which is much the way of grown folks also. At all events, Katy, having had her mother for principal companion, knew a great deal that would surprise you. Yet she was in other respects most childlike and innocent. In fact, perhaps, you would have been more surprised at the things she did not know.

"Mamma," said Katy, "what are we going to do about Christmas? You told me to wait, and I did wait; and now I can't wait any longer. To-morrow is Christmas, this very day! And whatever is going to be done had better be done."

"I am sorry, dear," said the lady, "to have to disappoint you. I hoped it would not be so bad. But you must be my brave daughter, and remember that although we cannot afford to make any outward show of our gladness, we have a great deal to be thankful for, and we can be really glad in our hearts when we think what Christmas means, to us and to all the world."

"Yes, I know," said Katy, with her great eyes fixed on her mother; "and, besides that, I have you and you have me, and you are my Christmas present and I am yours." Then she gave the lady a kiss, and continued: "But it is very nice to have a party, as we did last year, and a Christmas-tree and such fun! Mamma, does Santa Claus ask people whether they can afford it before he comes?"

The eyes were so steady that one of two things had to be done—either answer or run away. The lady on this occasion ran away, saying, "We will talk about that some other time. I must go out before the snow gets too deep in the street."



THE AGENT HEARD A SILVERY VOICE CALLING, "SANTA CLAUS! SANTA CLAUS!"

"Very well," said Katy, with dignity; I can wait. But, mamma, it is not wrong to have as good a time as we can?"

"No, indeed, my darling."

"Then suppose you leave it to me," said the child. Her mother was just going out of the room, and scarcely paused to think what Katy might mean; she said lightly, "Yes, dear, I'll leave it to you," and went up stairs to dress for her walk, with a mind full of more serious cares than those of a Christmas celebration.

As soon as she was gone little Kate walked straight to the register in the floor. She had reasoned it all out beforehand. Santa Claus couldn't get in by the fireplace, because there wasn't any. But perhaps the register, communicating as it did with the furnace, and that with the chimney, would do as well. And one of the girls at school had told her that if you wanted anything from Santa Claus you must call it into the chimney the day before Christmas. So she held her pretty head over the register, in spite of the hot air; and thus it came to pass that the agent, who was at that moment poking about the furnace in the cellar, heard a silvery voice calling, "Santa Claus!"

"Thunder an' lightning!" said the agent, "who's that?" This remark was addressed to nobody in particular; but Katy heard it with great delight. "Thunder and lightning!" she repeated softly; "why that's the same as donder and blitzen—'On, Comet! on, Cupid! on Donder and Blitzen!'—mamma said so! Oh, it must be Santa Claus himself, just going arbund beforehand, to find out what people would like best!" And, not a bit frightened, she called down the register again: "It's me—Katy. Don't you remember me? I would remember you, just as plain as anything, if I could only see you once! I'm awful glad I came to the register just as you did—but perhaps I stopped you coming up this way into the parlor? Were you coming up this way into the parlor, Santa Claus?"

"Och, blazes, no!" shouted the agent, who found it very warm, even where he was; "when I come I'll come by the door, an' I advise you to do the same, me darlin'. This hot air isn't good for yer little lungs."

"Oh, Santa Claus, how funny your voice sounds! It sounds just like the jolly agent that comes for the rent."

"An' I couldn't risimble a bitter gentleman: he's a broth of a boy, that agent, an' don't ye forget it! Sure I know him well. But I must be gittin' out o' this, or I'll spoil me complexion!"

"Very well," called Katy; "I shall expect you at the front door!" But she got no reply, for the agent had gone, and in a minute more was rubbing his head with snow to cool it down, as he said, to "a plisant summer hate," while he hurried away to old Crabbe's in order not to be too late with his report—and, for the time being, forgot little Katy and her childish fancy.

Then Katy's mother came down stairs and went out also—by the back door, because she was afraid of the front steps—and Katy was left alone in the house. For more than an hour she sat by the window, watching for Santa Claus to come. At last, she saw a figure in shaggy coat and big hat, all covered with snowflakes. That must be he! she thought, as she clasped her hands. He came nearer; he stopped on the other side of the street; he looked at No. 142; he began to cross—yes, it

was Santa Claus! Katy flew through the hall, opened the front door, and—to be continued in our next!

III

LEAVING our heroine in this exciting position, let us now see what was happening to the lady. We must do this, you know, in obedience to the rules of art; but I hate it as much as you do, and I promise to be quick about it. The lady had determined to spend a very little money for Katy. She would buy a Christmas card, at least. But she saw in the shops so many other things that she would have been so glad to give to her child as to make it hard for her to be resigned. And the agent's talk kept running in her head. "I only took the letter to his door," she murmured. "I ought to have spoken with him, face to face. A letter he might refuse to read; but he could not help seeing and hearing me. Yes! I will—for Katy's sake!" And suddenly she left the shop and hurried, as though afraid she might change her mind, to old Crabbe's house. He was not at home, the housekeeper said. She didn't know when he would be at home; and was about to shut the door, when the lady, with a strange impulse, said, "I will go in and wait for him—I am his daughter;" and in a moment she had passed into the well-known house, so that the housekeeper could do nothing but say, "Well, she never!" and go back to the kitchen. And at the very moment when Crabbe's front door opened to let his daughter in, the front door of No. 142 opened, and—

Now we have got to it, at last. Aren't you glad? Katy was glad, and as for old Crabbe—he didn't know how he felt. To be shot out of a snow-storm in that way; to think you are going to tumble down and break your nose, and then to find yourself in a warm hall and a pretty little girl dusting the snow from you with a broom, and talking as fast as she can, is enough to turn anybody's head.

"I knew you'd come!" cried Katy, dancing round him. "Mamma has gone out and I'm keeping house, and we needn't tell her till the whole thing is arranged!"



"THERE SHE WAS ON HIS KNEE, AND THOSE GRAY EYES JUST LOOKING THROUGH HIM."

What a lot of snow you have got on your knees!" and down she went on *her* knees to brush it off.

Old Crabbe looked down in bewilderment on the bright, curly head. His ideas had nearly all forsaken him; but one remained, and that one he spoke out. "Bad hole in the steps," he said. "I must have it mended!"

Katy jumped up when she heard that, crying, "Oh, you dear old Santa Claus! How could you find that out so soon? Why, that's one of the very things I was going to ask you!" And she climbed right up on a chair that stood in the hall, and threw her arms around old Crabbe's neck and gave him a kiss, so quick that he didn't know what was going to happen until it had happened and couldn't be prevented! Then she took off his hat, and even began as if she would help him take off his overcoat. But he resisted that, and she said, "Oh, I forgot. Of course you always wear that. You couldn't be taking it off and putting it on again so many times. It would wear all out. That's what wears out clothes more than anything else. You get your arm in the lining, and *rip* it goes! I know! But you must come into the parlor, for I've got lots and lots to say—only I'll say it very fast."

Indeed she kept her word, for, leading old Crabbe (who went as if he were in a dream and never spoke a word) into the parlor, she seated him in the arm-chair that used to be her father's, and then, plump! there she was on his knee and those gray eyes just looking through him. And how she talked! Probably old Crabbe couldn't have stopped her if he had tried—but he did not try. He sat and looked into those eyes as if they were water and he was thirsty. Once she paused to take breath, and, before she began again, asked him, "Am I too heavy?" Still he did not speak, but slowly worked his arm around her and shook his head. "I thought not," she said, with a smile of superior knowledge; "nobody ever said I was too heavy." And on she went with her story.

"So you see," said she at last, "you have got to help a good deal this time. Mamma has not got any money to spare; but I've got ten cents that she don't know anything about. The agent gave them to me one day. We must get something pretty for him. You like him, you know. You said he was a broth of a boy!"

"Oh, did I?" muttered old Crabbe; but with those eyes upon him he could not deny it.

"Now, I'll tell you my plan," said the child. "You will take me along with you when you go shopping this afternoon. You have such lots of things to get and you can get bargains, I know." Mamma says that people who buy a great deal can do much better. That's one thing that makes our things so dear, because we buy so little at a time. So you can help me to spend my ten cents, and you can show me how to make a real merry Christmas for mamma. Now Santa Claus, *do!*" she added, as she saw the old man just about to speak, with a look in his face like *no*; "I'd just do anything for you. You haven't got another little girl in the world that would be more grateful than I would be!"

"Would you?"—said old Crabbe slowly—"do you think you would—be willing to—give me another kiss—even if I was not Santa Claus?"

"I'll give you a hundred, and begin right away," said Kate eagerly; "but if you wasn't Santa Claus, of course not. It wouldn't be proper, unless you were my grandfather or something. But you *are* Santa Claus, you know; so what's the use of talking like that?"

"Yes," said old Crabbe boldly, "under the circumstances, I am Santa Claus—though I wish I was your grandfather."

"Well, I don't," said little Kate. "I've got a grandfather somewhere, and he's no use at all. Mamma only cries when I talk about him, and says 'Hush, my dear,' and I'll tell you what I think: I think that he is deaf and dumb and blind, and that he has lost his mind, too, and that they have put him in prison and he don't know enough to get out, or even to want to get out—just like a—like an idiot rabbit!" she concluded triumphantly, and added in a tone of deep pity, "poor old grandfather Crabbe!"

There was a dead silence for a minute, and then old Crabbe spoke. "On the whole," said he, "I prefer to be Santa Claus. Come!"

But the air of bewilderment and uncertainty had disappeared. He waited impatiently while Katy put on her red cloak and hood, and as soon as the door was open he lifted her in his arms and strode out across the dangerous step into the snow. The storm had ceased and the sun was still two hours high.

A carriage was passing. Old Crabbe hailed the driver, hired the carriage and put little Kate into it. "Lots to do," said he; "we must hurry."

"Oh, yes indeed," said Katy. "You will have to drive hard, to get around to all the houses. Why, it would take an hour to go to the little girls that I know."

"How many do you know? Tell me where they live," said he; and in a few minutes he had the names of some twenty girls. Then he stopped the carriage, and left Katy in it for a moment. Looking out of the window she saw him enter a door over which was the sign: *District Telegraph Office. Messengers at All Hours.* But she did not see or hear his astonishing performances in there, the result of which was that all the messengers in the concern were off within five minutes carrying invitations to the houses of Katy's friends, begging them to please excuse lack of ceremony, and come to No. 142, with their brothers, and fathers and mothers too, if they liked, that very evening.

As old Crabbe was about to get into the carriage again he spied the agent coming along the street. "Just the man I want to see! Hello, there! Go right down to No. 142, and stop on the way at the confectioner's and order a supper for about—well, about a hundred—and have those steps mended in half an hour; and while you are about it, get a big Christmas tree, and all the fixings. Never mind what it costs, I'll pay it; I'm good for it—well, what are you staring at? Get along, can't you! Stay—this is for yourself. Now hurry up, will you?" And he put into the hands of the astonished agent several gold pieces amounting to more than a month's salary. But the agent caught a glimpse of Katy in the carriage, and understood how the matter lay without any explanations; and away he went, as wild as a young colt with delight. "Whoop!" said he; "to think of ould Crabbe caught by the witch of a choidl. Oh, Kathleen Mavourneen! av ye begin this way whin ye're young, faith the boys'll break hearts an' heads for yer party eyes whin ye're a bit older!"

Meanwhile old Crabbe—old *Crabbe!*—was shopping like mad. Whatever Katy admired he bought. The shopkeepers all knew him, and knew that he was able to pay. So they made no objection to his extravagance, though they could not understand it. At last Katy herself interfered. "Santa Claus," said she gravely, "I am afraid you are spending too much money. You don't seem to understand shopping. You ought to look at things and admire them and ask the price, and whether they will wash, and say you will look further before deciding; and then the clerk will offer to sell them

to you at cost, because it is you, and he would like to oblige an old customer!"

"Oh, I know how it's done!" said old Crabbe, remembering his merchant days.

"Then why don't you do it?" pursued Katy. "You just ask how much it is, and say, 'Do it up! That's no way to shop! And I'm afraid you'll waste all the money in the world, and that will make everybody poor!'"

"Now, don't you worry," said old Crabbe cheerily. "I like this way of shopping best. And I've got plenty. Why, child, I've got twenty thousand dollars to spend, if I like!"

"Oh, what a lot!" said Katy. "But I suppose it don't make so very much, when you divide it around. Of course, I like it; you needn't stop on my account. I never had such fun in my life as buying the Christmas presents for all the boys and girls in town!"

So that wild shopping went on until both of them were tired. Meanwhile the agent and a crowd of assistants were working like men distracted at No. 142, receiving and arranging the articles that came to the door in a perfect procession of express wagons; and all the folks in the neighborhood were flattening their noses on their window-panes in admiration of the wonderful goings on at No. 142, or else they were scrubbing and dressing the children who had been invited to spend the evening there.

At last old Crabbe and Katy drove up to the door. It was almost time for the party to begin. He wouldn't let her go into the parlor, but made her hurry up stairs to her own room to put on her best dress. "Whatever you find up there on the bed," he shouted after her, "that's what I mean!" For there had been a bundle of wonderful clothes—just out of fairy-land—sent to the house an hour before, with directions to the agent; and the contents were all arranged in Katy's chamber. Now it was her turn to think she was in a dream!

But old Crabbe was very wide awake now. He dashed back into the carriage and drove swiftly to his own house. The housekeeper met him at the door, but he

ran by her so quickly that he was half-way up stairs before he heard her say, "And now she's gone, and good riddance!"

"Who's gone?" he asked sharply.

"A crazy woman, who said she was your daughter, and stayed till I told her to get out."

"You're an old fool!" said Mr. Crabbe to the housekeeper. "No; I'm an old fool—or was. But I can't stop to explain now. Look here; you'll have the upstairs bedrooms aired to-morrow, and send word to the cabinet-maker and—and everybody—that I want to see them early. Do you hear? And old Crabbe disappeared into his own room, leaving the housekeeper struck by lightning. In less than ten minutes he was out again, dressed in a blue coat with brass buttons and a splendid frilled shirt-bosom, such as fine gentlemen used to wear in his younger days. And he certainly looked like a fine gentleman, a younger and happier one than had gone out of that house for many a day. Into the carriage again and off like the wind!

As he whirled through the streets, he caught sight of a woman's figure, plodding slowly along the snowy sidewalk. He started, and was on the point of stopping the carriage; but he checked himself, saying, "It is only a few minutes more that she will wait and suffer. And perhaps she could not forgive me here and now. I must have the child at hand." So he leaned back out of sight, and the carriage drove swiftly by, leaving the lady toiling bravely but sadly homeward.

Why, what was this? Her old house gleaming with lights and running over with music and laughter—guests coming in crowds—those rickety steps gone—a bower of greens arching the front door! She leaned against the gate in speechless amazement. But they were on the look-out for her, and once more—for the last time in this story—Katy opened the door, and—

TO BE CONTINUED; for the happiness that came that day never departed any more, but was continued, like a story without end, through the next and the next and the next.

AT THE STATION.

I CAME to the railway station

As the train just thundered in,
'Mid the pushing throng and confusion,
And dust and hurry and din.

On the platform two lovers were standing,
Hand-in-hand, lip to lip, tear in eye;
And I said to myself, "They are bidding
Each other a long good-by."

And I pitied the left and the leaving;
For I thought how sorrow lay,
Like a pall, on two hearts sundered
From each other for many a day.

But the train moved on, and the lovers,

Arm-in-arm, walked down the street;
And I saw they had come to the station
Not to part there, but to meet.

And the tears I had seen were the language
Of a joy that no other speech knew—
The same that is uttered by sorrow
When bidding a long adieu.

For sorrow and joy, in expression
And in essence, are near of kin;
And they hallow this life which, without them,
Were all dust and hurry and din.

C. S. PERCIVAL.

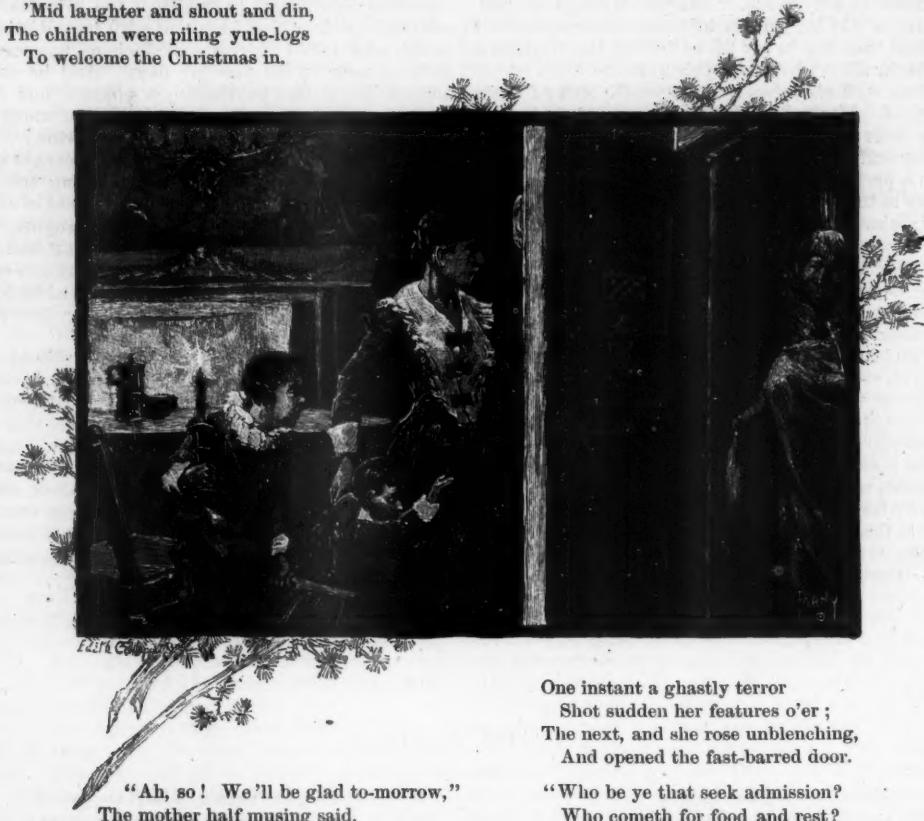


LADY YEARDLEY'S GUEST.

(1654.)

'Twas a Saturday night, mid-winter,
And the snow with its sheeted pall
Had covered the stubbled clearings
That girdled the rude built "Hall."
But high in the deep-mouthed chimney,
'Mid laughter and shout and din,
The children were piling yule-logs
To welcome the Christmas in.

She sighed :— As she paused, a whisper
Set quickly all eyes a-strain :—
"See! See!"—and the boy's hand pointed—
"There's a face at the window pane!"



"Ah, so! We'll be glad to-morrow,"
The mother half musing said,
As she looked at the eager workers,
And laid on a sunny head
A touch as of benediction—
"For Heaven is just as near
The father at far Patuxent,
As if he were with us here."

"So choose ye the pine and holly,
And shake from their boughs the snow ;
We'll garland the rough-hewn rafters
As they garlanded long ago,—
Or ever Sir George went sailing*
Away o'er the wild sea foam,—
In my beautiful English Sussex,
The happy old walls at home."

One instant a ghastly terror
Shot sudden her features o'er ;
The next, and she rose unblenching,
And opened the fast-barred door.

"Who be ye that seek admission?
Who cometh for food and rest?
This night is a night above others
To shelter a straying guest."
Deep out of the snowy silence
A guttural answer broke :
"I come from the great Three Rivers,
I am Chief of the Roan-oke."

Straight in through the frightened children,
Unshrinking, the red man strode,
And loosed on the blazing hearthstone,
From his shoulder a light borne load ;
And out of the pile of deer-skins,
With look as serene and mild
As if it had been his cradle,
Stepped softly a little child.

* Sir George Yeardley, Governor of the Colony of Virginia in 1626.



As he chafed at the fire his fingers,
Close pressed to the brawny knee,
The gaze that the silent savage
Bent on him, was strange to see.
And then with a voice whose yearning
The father could scarcely stem,
He said—to the children pointing—
“I want him to be like them!”

“They weep for the boy in the wigwam;
I bring him a moon of days,
To learn of the speaking paper,
To hear of the wiser ways
Of the people beyond the water,
To break with the plow the sod,—
To be kind to papoose and woman,—
To pray to the white man’s God.”

“I give thee my hand!” And the Lady
Pressed forward with sudden cheer;
“Thou shalt eat of my English pudding,
And drink of my Christmas beer.—
My sweethearts, this night remember,
All strangers are kith and kin.
This night when the dear Lord’s Mother
Could find no room at the inn!”

Next morn from the colony belfry
Pealed gayly the Sunday chime,
And merrily forth the people
Flocked, keeping the Christmas time.
And the Lady with bright-eyed children
Behind her, their lips a-smile,
And the Chief in his skins and wampum,
Came walking the narrow aisle.

Forthwith from the congregation
Broke fiercely a sullen cry;
“Out! out! with the crafty red-skin!
Hear at him! A spy! A spy!”
And quickly from belts leaped daggers,
And swords from their sheaths flashed bare,
And men from their seats defiant
Sprang, ready to slay him there.

But facing the crowd with courage
As calm as a knight of yore,
Stepped bravely the fair-browed woman,
The thrust of the steel before;
And spake with a queenly gesture,
Her hand on the Chief’s brown breast,
“Ye dare not impeach my honor!
Ye dare not insult my guest!”

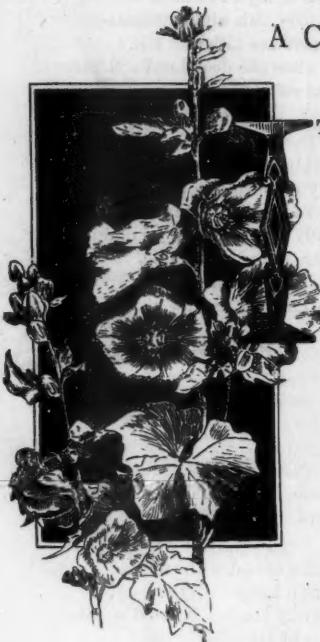
They dropped at her word their weapons,
Half-shamed as the Lady smiled,
And told them the red man’s story,
And showed them the red man’s child;
And pledged them her broad plantations,
That never would such betray
The trust that a Christian woman
Had shown on a Christmas Day!

MARGARET J. PRESTON.



A CHRISTMAS EVE IN WAR TIMES.

BY E. P. ROE.



IT WAS the beginning of a battle. The skirmish line of the Union advance was sweeping rapidly over a rough mountainous region in the South, and, in his place on the extreme left of this line was private Anson Marlow. Tall trees rising from underbrush, rocks, boulders, gulches worn by spring torrents, were the characteristics of the field, which was in wild contrast with the parade-grounds on which the combatants had first learned the tactics of war. The major-

ity, however, of those now in the ranks had since been drilled too often under like circumstances, and with lead and iron-shotted guns, not to know their duty, and the lines of battle were as regular as the broken country allowed. So far as many obstacles permitted Marlow kept his proper distance from the others on the line and fired coolly when he caught glimpses of the retreating Confederate skirmishers. They were retiring with ominous readiness toward a wooded height which the enemy occupied with a force of unknown strength. That strength was soon manifested in temporary disaster to the Union forces, which were driven back with heavy loss.

Neither the battle nor its fortunes are the objects of our present concern, but rather the fate of private Marlow. The tide of battle drifted away and left the soldier desperately wounded, in a narrow ravine, through which babbled a small stream. Excepting the voices of his wife and children, no music had ever sounded so sweetly in his ears. With great difficulty he crawled to a little bubbling pool formed by a tiny cascade and encircling stones, and partially slaked his intolerable thirst.

He believed he was dying—bleeding to death. The very thought blunted his faculties for a time, and he was conscious of little beyond a dull wonder. Could it be possible that the tragedy of his death was enacting in that peaceful, secluded nook? Could nature be so indifferent or so unconscious, if it were true that he was soon to lie there *dead*? He saw the speckled trout lying motionless at the bottom of the pool, the gray squirrels sporting in the boughs over his head. The sunlight shimmered and glinted through the leaves, flecking with light his prostrate form. He dipped his hand in the blood that had welled from his side and it fell in rubies from his fingers. Could that be his blood—his life-blood, and would it soon all ooze away?

Could it be that death was coming through all the brightness of that summer afternoon?

From a shadowed tree farther up the glen, a wood thrush suddenly began its almost unrivaled song. The familiar melody, heard so often from his cottage-porch in the June twilight, awoke him to the bitter truth. His wife had then sat beside him, his little ones played here and there among the trees and shrubbery. They would hear the same song to-day; he would never hear it again. That counted for little, but the thought of their sitting behind the vines and listening to their favorite bird, spring after spring and summer after summer, and he ever absent, overwhelmed him.

"O Gertrude, my wife, my wife! O my children!" he groaned.

His breast heaved with a great sigh; the blood welled afresh from his wound; what seemed a mortal weakness crept over him, and he thought he died.

"Say, Eb, is he done gone?"

"Clar to grashus if I know. 'Pears mighty like it."

These words were spoken by two stout negroes, who had stolen toward the battle-field as the sounds of conflict died away.

"I'm doggoned if I tink he's dead. He's only swoonded," asserted the man addressed as Eb. "Twon't do to leave him here to die, Zack."

"Sartin not; we'd hab bad luck all our days."

"I guess ole man Pearson will keep him, and his wife's a po'ful nuss."

"Pearson orter; he's a Unioner."

"S'pose we try him; 'tain't so very fur off."

On the morning of the 24th of December Mrs. Anson Marlow sat in the living-room of her cottage, that stood well out in the suburbs of a Northern town. Her eyes were hollow and full of trouble that seemed almost beyond tears, and the bare room, that had been stripped of almost every appliance and suggestion of comfort, but too plainly indicated one of the causes. Want was stamped on her thin face, that once had been so full and pretty: poverty in its bitter extremity was unmistakably shown by the uncarpeted floor, the meagre fire and scanty furniture. It was a period of depression; work had been scarce, and much of the time she had been too ill and feeble to do more than care for her children. Away back in August her resources had been running low, but she had daily expected the long arrears of pay which her husband would receive as soon as the exigencies of the campaign permitted. Instead of these funds, so greatly needed, came the tidings of a Union defeat, with her husband's name down among the missing. Beyond that brief mention, so horrible in its vagueness, she had never heard a word from the one who not only sustained her home but also her heart. Was he languishing in a Southern prison, or, mortally wounded, had he lingered out some terrible hours on that wild battle-field, a brief description of which had been so dwelt upon by her morbid fancy that it had become like one of the scenes in Dante's Inferno? For a long time she could not and would not believe that such an overwhelming disaster had befallen her and her children,

although she knew that similar losses had come to thousands of others. Events that the world regards as not only possible but probable, are often so terrible in their consequences that we shrink from even the bare thought of their occurrence.

If Mrs. Marlow had been told from the first that her husband was dead, the shock resulting would not have been so injurious as the suspense that robbed her of rest for days, weeks and months. She haunted the post-office, and if a stranger was seen coming up the street

word "missing" would pierce her heart like an arrow, and she would moan and at times, in the depths of her anguish, cry out, "Oh, where is he? Shall I ever see him again?"

But the unrelenting demands of life are made as surely upon the breaking as upon the happy heart. She and the children must have food, clothing and shelter. Her illness and feebleness at last taught her that she must not yield to her grief, except so far as she was unable to suppress it; that, for the sake of those now seemingly



WOUNDED AT THE BROOK.

toward her cottage she watched feverishly for his turning in at her gate with the tidings of her husband's safety. Night after night she lay awake, hoping, praying that she might hear his step returning on a furlough to which wounds or sickness had entitled him. The natural and inevitable result was illness and nervous prostration.

Practical neighbors had told her that her course was all wrong; that she should be resigned and even cheerful for her children's sake; that she needed to sleep well and live well in order that she might have strength to provide for them. She would make pathetic attempts to follow this sound and thrifty advice, but suddenly, when at her work or in her troubled sleep, that awful

dependent upon her, she must rally every shattered nerve and every relaxed muscle. With a heroism far beyond that of her husband and his comrades in the field, she sought to fight the wolf from the door, or at least to keep him at bay. Although the struggle seemed a hopeless one, she patiently did her best from day to day, eking out her scanty earnings by the sale or pawn of such of her household goods as she could best spare. She felt that she would do anything rather than reveal her poverty or accept charity. Some help was more or less kindly offered, but beyond such aid as one neighbor may receive of another she had said gently but firmly, "Not yet."

The Marrows were comparative strangers in the city

where they had resided. Her husband had been a teacher in one of its public schools and his salary small. Patriotism had been his motive for entering the army, and, while it had cost him a mighty struggle to leave his family, he felt that he had no more reason to hold back than thousands of others. He believed that he could still provide for those dependent upon him, and if he fell, those for whom he died would not permit his widow and children to suffer. But the first popular enthusiasm for the war had largely died out; the city was full of widows and orphans; there was depression of spirit and a very general disposition on the part of those who had means, to take care of themselves, and provide for darker days that might be in the immediate future. Sensitive, retiring Mrs. Marlow was not the one to push her claims or reveal her need. Moreover she could never give up the hope that tidings from her husband might, at any time, bring relief and safety.

But the crisis had come at last, and on this dreary December day she was face to face with absolute want. The wolf, with his gaunt eyes, was crouched beside her cold hearth. A pittance owed to her for work had not been paid; the little food left in the house had furnished the children an unsatisfying breakfast. She had eaten nothing. On the table beside her lay a note from the agent of the estate of which her home was a part, bidding her call that morning. She knew why—the rent was two months in arrears. It seemed like death to leave the house in which her husband had placed her and wherein she had spent her happiest days. It stood well away from the crowded town. The little yard and garden, with their trees, vines and shrubbery, some of which her husband had planted, were all dear from association. In the rear there was a grove and open fields, which, though not belonging to the cottage, were not forbidden to the children, and they formed a wonderland of delight in spring, summer and fall. Must she take her active, restless boy Jamie, the image of his father, into a crowded tenement? Must golden-haired Susie, with her dower of beauty, be imprisoned in one close room; or else be exposed to the evil of corrupt association just beyond the threshold?

Moreover, her retired home had become a refuge. Here she could hide her sorrow and poverty. Here she could touch what he had touched and sit, during the long winter evenings, in his favorite corner by the fire. Around her, within and without, were the little appliances for her comfort which his hands had made. How could she leave all this and live? Deep in her heart also the hope would linger that he would come again and seek her where he had left her.

"O God!" she cried suddenly. "Thou wouldest not, couldst not, permit him to die without one farewell word," and she buried her face in her hands and rocked back and forth, whilst hard, dry sobs shook her slight, famine-pinched form.

The children stopped their play and came and leaned upon her lap.

"Don't cry, mother," said Jamie, a little boy of ten; "I'll soon be big enough to work for you, and I'll get rich, and you shall have the biggest house in town. I'll take care of you if papa don't come back."

Little Sue knew not what to say, but the impulse of her love was her best guide. She threw her arms around her mother's neck with such an impetuous and child-like outburst of affection that the poor woman's bitter and despairing thoughts were banished for a time. The deepest chord of her nature, mother love, was touched, and for their sakes she rose up once more and faced the hard problems of her life. Putting on her bonnet and thin

shawl (she had parted with much that she now so sorely needed), she went out into the cold December wind. The sky was clouded like her hopes, and the light, even in the morning hours, was dim and leaden-hued.

She first called on Mr. Jackson, the agent from whom she rented her home, and besought him to give her a little more time.

"I will beg for work from door to door," she said. "Surely in this Christian city there must be those who will give me work, and that is all I ask."

The sleek, comfortable man, in his well-appointed office, was touched slightly, and said in a voice that was not as gruff as he at first had intended it should be:

"Well, I will wait a week or two longer. If then you cannot pay something on what is already due, my duty to my employers will compel me to take the usual course. You have told me all along that your husband would surely return, and I have hated to say a word to discourage you; but I fear you will have to bring yourself to face the truth and act accordingly, as so many others have done. I know it's very hard for you, but I am held responsible by my employer, and at my intercession he has been lenient, as you must admit. You could get a room or two in town for half what you must pay where you are. Good morning."

She went out again into the street, which the shrouded sky made sombre in spite of preparations seen on every side for the chief festival of the year. The fear was growing strong that like Him, in whose memory the day was honored, she and her little ones might soon not know where to lay their heads. She succeeded in getting the small sum owed to her and payment also for some sewing just finished. More work she could not readily obtain, for every one was busy and preoccupied by the coming day of gladness.

"Call again," some said kindly or carelessly, according to their nature. "After the holidays are over we will try to have or make some work for you."

"But I need—I must have work now," she ventured to say whenever she had the chance.

In response to this appeal there were a few offers of charity, small indeed, but from which she drew back with an instinct so strong that it could not be overcome. On every side she heard the same story. The times were very hard; requests for work and aid had been so frequent that purses and patience were exhausted. Moreover, people had spent their Christmas money on their own households and friends, and were already beginning to feel poor.

At last she obtained a little work, and having made a few purchases of that which was absolutely essential, she was about to drag her weary feet homeward when the thought occurred to her that the children would want to hang up their stockings at night, and she murmured, "It may be the last chance I shall ever have to put a Christmas gift in them. Oh, that I were stronger! Oh, that I could take my sorrow more as others seem to take theirs! But I cannot; I cannot. My burden seems greater than I can bear. The cold of this awful day is chilling my very heart, and my grief, as hope dies, is crushing my soul. Oh, he must be dead, he must be dead! That is what they all think. God help my little ones! Oh, what will become of them if I sink, as I fear I shall! If it were not for them I feel as if I would fall and die here in the street. Well, be our fate what it may, they shall owe to me one more gleam of happiness," and she went into a confectioner's shop and bought a few ornamented cakes. These were the only gifts she could afford, and they must be in the form of food.

Before she reached home the snow was whirling in the frosty air, and the shadows of the brief winter day deepening fast. With a smile far more pathetic than tears she greeted the children, who were cold, hungry and frightened at her long absence; and they, children-like, saw only the smile, and not the grief it masked. They saw also the basket which she placed on the table, and were quick to note that it seemed a little fuller than of late.

"Jamie," she said, "run to the store down the street for some coal and kindlings that I bought, and then we will have a nice fire and a nice supper," and the boy, at such a prospect, darted off to obey.

She was glad to have him gone, that she might hide her weakness. She sank into a chair, so white and faint that even little Susie left off peering into the basket and came to her with a troubled face.

"It's nothing, dearie," the poor creature said. "Mamma's only a little tired. See," she added, tottering to the table, "I have brought you a great piece of gingerbread."

The hungry child grasped it, and was oblivious and happy.

By the time Jamie returned with his first basket of kindling and coal, the mother had so far rallied from her exhaustion as to meet him smilingly again and help him replenish the dying fire.

"Now you shall rest and have your gingerbread before going for your second load," she said cheerily, and the boy took what was ambrosia to him and danced around the room in joyous reaction from the depression of the long, weary day, during which, lonely and hungry, he had wondered why his mother did not return.

"So little could make them happy, and yet I cannot seem to obtain even that little," she sighed. "I fear—indeed, I fear—I cannot be with them another Christmas; therefore they shall remember that I tried to make them happy once more, and the recollection may survive the long, sad days before them, and become a part of my memory."

The room was now growing dark, and she lighted the lamp. Then she cowered shivering over the reviving fire, feeling as if she could never be warm again.

The street-lamps were lighted early on that clouded, stormy evening, and they were a signal to Mr. Jackson, the agent, to leave his office. He remembered that he had ordered an extra fine five o'clock dinner, and now found himself in a mood to enjoy it. He had scarcely left his door before a man, coming up the street with great strides and head bent down to the snow-laden blast, brushed roughly against him. The stranger's cap was drawn over his eyes and the raised collar of his blue army overcoat nearly concealed his face. The man hurriedly begged pardon and was hastening on when Mr. Jackson's exclamation of surprise caused him to stop and look at the person he had jostled.

"Why, Mr. Marlow," the agent began, "I'm glad to see you. It's a pleasure I feared I should never have again."

"My wife," the man almost gasped, "she's still in the house I rented of you?"

"Oh, certainly," was the hasty reply. "It'll be all right now."

"What do you mean? Has it not been all right?"

"Well, you see," said Mr. Jackson apologetically, "we have been very lenient toward your wife, but the rent has not been paid for over two months, and—"

"And you were about to turn her and her children out of doors in midwinter," broke in the soldier wrathfully. "That is the way you sleek, comfortable stay-

at-home people care for those fighting your battles. After you concluded that I was dead, and that the rent might not be forthcoming, you decided to put my wife into the street. Open your office, sir, and you shall have your rent."

"Now, Mr. Marlow, there's no use of opening on me in this way. You know that I am but an agent, and—"

"Tell your rich employer, then, what I have said, and ask him what he would be worth to-day were there not men like myself, who are willing to risk everything and suffer everything for the Union. But I've no time to bandy words. Have you seen my wife lately?"

"Yes," was the hesitating reply; "she was here today, and I—"

"How is she? What did you say to her?"

"Well, she doesn't look very strong. I felt sorry for her and gave her more time, taking the responsibility myself—"

"How much time?"

"I said two weeks, but no doubt I could have got the time extended."

"I have my doubts. Will you and your employer please accept my humble gratitude that you had the grace not to turn her out of doors during the holiday season. It might have caused remark, but that consideration and some others that I might name are not to be weighed against a few dollars and cents. I shall now remove the strain upon your patriotism at once, and will not only pay arrears but two months in advance."

"Oh, there's no need of that to-day."

"Yes, there is. My wife shall feel to-night that she has a home. She evidently has not received the letter I wrote as soon as I reached our lines, or you would not have been talking to her about two weeks more of shelter."

The agent reopened his office and saw a roll of bills extracted from Marlow's pocket that left no doubt of the soldier's ability to provide for his family. He gave his receipt in silence, feeling that words would not mend matters, and then trudged off to his extra dinner with a flagging appetite.

As Marlow strode away he came to a sudden resolution—he would look on his wife and children before they saw him; he would feast his eyes while they were unconscious of the love that was beaming upon them. The darkness and storm favored his project, and in brief time he saw the light in his window. Unlatching the gate softly and with his steps muffled by the snow that already carpeted the frozen ground, he reached the window, the blinds of which were but partially closed. His children frolicking about the room were the first objects that caught his eye, and he almost laughed aloud in his joy. Then, by turning another blind slightly, he saw his wife shivering over the fire.

"Great God!" he muttered, "how she has suffered!" and he was about to rush in and take her into his arms. On the threshold he restrained himself, paused and said, "No, not yet; I'll break the news of my return in my own way. The shock of my sudden appearance might be too great for her;" and he went back to the window. The wife's eyes were following her children with such a wistful tenderness that the boy, catching her gaze, stopped his sport, came to her side and began to speak. They were but a few feet away, and Marlow caught every word.

"Mamma," the child said, "you didn't eat any breakfast, and I don't believe you have eaten anything to-day. You are always giving everything to us. Now I declare I won't eat another bit unless you take half of my cake," and he broke off a piece and laid it in her lap.

"Oh, Jamie," cried the poor woman, "you looked so like your father when you spoke that I could almost see him," and she caught him in her arms and covered him with kisses.

"I'll soon be big enough to take care of you. I'm going to grow up just like papa and do everything for you," the boy said proudly as she released him.

Little Susie also came and placed what was left of her cake in her mother's lap, saying :

"I'll work for you, too, mamma, and I'll sell the doll Santa Claus gave me last Christmas to-morrow, and then we'll all have plenty to eat."

Anson Marlow was sobbing outside the window, as only a man weeps, and his tears in the bitter cold became drops of ice before they reached the ground.

"My darlings!" the mother cried. "O God, spare me to you and provide some way for us. Your love should make me rich though I lack all else. There, I won't cry any more, and you shall have as happy a Christmas as I can give you. Perhaps He who knew what it was to be homeless and shelterless will provide for our need: so we'll try to trust Him and keep His birthday. And now, Jamie, go and bring the rest of the coal, and then we will make the dear home that papa gave us cheery and warm once more. If he were only with us we wouldn't mind hunger or cold, would we? O my husband!" she broke out afresh, "if you could only come back, even though crippled and helpless, I feel that I could live and grow strong from simple gladness."

"Don't you think, mamma," Jamie asked, "that God will let papa come down from Heaven and spend Christmas with us? He might be here like the angels, and we not see him."

"I'm afraid not," the sad woman replied, shaking her head and speaking more to herself than to the child. "I don't see how he could go back to Heaven and be happy if he knew all. No, we must be patient and try to do our best, so that we can go to him. Go now, Jamie, before it gets too late. I'll get supper, and then we'll sing a Christmas hymn, and you and Susie shall hang up your stockings, just as you did last Christmas, when dear papa was with us. We'll try to do everything he would wish, and then by-and-by we shall see him again."

As the boy started on his errand his father stepped back out of the light of the window, then followed the child with a great yearning in his heart. He would make sure the boy was safe at home again before he carried out his plan. From a distance he saw the little fellow receive the coal and start slowly homeward with the burden, and he followed to a point where the light of the street lamps ceased, then joined the child and said in a gruff voice, "Here, little man, I'm going your way. Let me carry your basket," and he took it and strode on so fast that the boy had to run to keep pace with him. Jamie shuffled along through the snow as well as he could, but his little legs were so short in comparison with those of the kindly stranger that he found himself gradually falling behind. So he put on an extra burst of speed and managed to lay hold of the long blue skirt of the army overcoat.

"Please don't go quite so fast," he panted.

The stranger slackened his pace, and in a constrained tone of voice asked :

"How far are you going, little man?"

"Only to our house—mamma's. She's Mrs. Marlow, you know."

"Yes, I know—that is, I reckon I do. How much farther is it?"

"Oh, not much; we're most half-way now. I say, you're a soldier, aren't you?"

"Yes, my boy," said Marlow, with a lump in his throat. "Why?"

"Well, you see, my papa is a soldier too, and I thought you might know him. We haven't heard from him for a good while, and—" choking a bit—"mamma's afraid he is hurt, or taken prisoner or something." He could not bring himself to say "killed."

Jamie let go the overcoat to draw his sleeve across his eyes, and the big man once more strode on faster than ever, and Jamie began to fear lest the dusky form might disappear in the snow and darkness with both basket and coal, but the apparent stranger so far forgot his part that he put down the basket at Mrs. Marlow's gate and then passed on so quickly that the panting boy had not time to thank him. Indeed, Anson Marlow knew that if he lingered but a moment he would have the child in his arms.

"Why, Jamie," exclaimed his mother, "how could you get back so soon with that heavy basket? It was too heavy for you, but you will have to be mamma's little man now."

"A big man caught up with me and carried it. I don't care if he did have a gruff voice, I'm sure he was a good, kind man. He knew where we lived, too, for he put the basket down at our gate before I could say a word. I was so out of breath, and then he was out of sight in a minute." Some instinct kept him from saying anything about the army overcoat.

"It's some neighbor that lives farther up the street, I suppose, and saw you getting the coal at the store," Mrs. Marlow said. "Yes, Jamie, it was a good, kind act to help a little boy, and I think he'll have a happier Christmas for doing it."

"Do you really think he'll have a happier Christmas, mamma?"

"Yes, I truly think so. We are so made that we cannot do a kind act without feeling the better for it."

"Well, I think he was a queer sort of a man if he was kind. I never knew any one to walk so fast. I spoke to him once, but he did not answer. Perhaps the wind roared so he couldn't hear me."

"No doubt he was hurrying home to his wife and children," she said, with a deep sigh.

When his boy disappeared within the door of the cottage, Marlow turned and walked rapidly toward the city, first going to the grocery at which he had been in the habit of purchasing his supplies. The merchant stared for a moment, then stepped forward and greeted his customer warmly.

"Well," he said, after his first exclamations of surprise were over, "the snow has made you almost as white as a ghost, but I'm glad you're not one. We scarce ever thought to see you again."

"Has my wife an open account here now?" was the brief response.

"Yes, and it might have been much larger. I've told her so, too. She stopped taking credit some time ago, and when she's had a dollar or two to spare she's paid it on the old score. She bought so little that I said to her once that she need not go elsewhere to buy—that I'd sell to her as cheap as any one; that I believed you'd come back all right, and if you didn't she could pay me when she could. What do you think she did? Why she burst out crying, and said, 'God bless you, sir, for saying my husband will come back. So many have discouraged me.' I declare to you her feeling was so right down genuine that I had to mop my own eyes. But she wouldn't take any more credit, and she bought

so little that I've been troubled. I'd have sent her something, but your wife somehow ain't one of them kind that you can give things to, and—"

Marlow interrupted the good-hearted, garrulous shopman by saying significantly, "Come with me to your back-office;" for the soldier feared that some one might enter who would recognize him and carry the tidings to his home prematurely.

"Mr. Wilkins," he said rapidly, "I wanted to find out if you, too, had thrifitly shut down on a soldier's wife. You shall not regret your kindness."

"Hang it all," broke in Wilkins with compunction, "I haven't been very kind. I ought to have gone and seen your wife and found out how things were, and I meant to, but I've been so confoundedly busy—"

"No matter now, I've not a moment to spare. You must help me to break the news of my return in my own way. I mean they shall have such a Christmas in the little cottage as was never known in this town. You could send a load right over there couldn't you?"

"Certainly, certainly," said Wilkins, under the impulse of both business thrift and good-will, and a list of tea, coffee, sugar, flour, apples, etc., was dashed off rapidly; and Marlow had the satisfaction of seeing the errand-boy, and the two clerks and the proprietor himself, busily working to fill the order in the shortest possible space of time.

He next went to a restaurant, a little farther down the street, where he had taken his meals for a short time before he brought his family to town, and was greeted with almost equal surprise and warmth. Marlow cut short all words by his almost feverish haste. A huge turkey had just been roasted for the needs of the coming holiday, and this with a cold ham and a pot of coffee was ordered to be sent in a covered tray within a quarter of an hour. Then a toy-shop was visited, and such a doll purchased! for tears came into Marlow's eyes whenever he thought of his child's offer to sell her dolly for her mother's sake.

After selecting a sled for Jamie and directing that they should be sent at once, he could restrain his impatience no longer, and almost tore back to his station at the cottage window. His wife was placing the meagre little supper on the table, and how poor and scanty it was!

"Is that the best the dear soul can do on Christmas eve?" he groaned. "Why, there's scarcely enough for little Sue. Thank God, my darling, I will sit down with you to rather different supper before long."

He bowed his head reverently with his wife as she asked God's blessing, and wondered at her faith. Then he looked and listened again with a heart-hunger which had been growing for months.

"Do you really think Santa Claus will fill our stockings to-night?" Sue asked.

"I think he'll have something for you," she replied. "There are so many poor little boys and girls in the city that he may not be able to bring very much to you."

"Who is Santa Claus, anyway?" questioned Jamie.

Tears came into the wife's eyes as she thought of the one who had always remembered them so kindly as far as his modest means permitted.

She hesitated in her reply, and before she could decide upon an answer there was a knock at the door. Jamie ran to open it, and started back as a man entered with cap, eyebrows, beard and shaggy coat all white with the falling snow. He placed two great baskets of provisions on the floor, and said they were for Mrs. Anson Marlow.

"There is some mistake," Mrs. Marlow began, but

the children, after staring a moment, shouted, "Santa Claus! Santa Claus!"

The grocer's man took the unexpected cue instantly, and said, "No mistake, ma'am. They are from Santa Claus;" and before another word could be spoken he was gone. The face of the grocer's man was not very familiar to Mrs. Marlow, and the snow had disguised him completely. The children had no misgivings, and pounced upon the baskets, and, with exclamations of delight, drew out such articles as they could lift.

"I can't understand it," said the mother, bewildered and almost frightened.

"Why, mamma, it's as plain as day," cried Jamie. "Didn't he look just like the pictures of Santa Claus—white beard and white eyebrows? Oh, mamma, mamma, here is a great paper of red-cheeked apples;" and he and Susie tugged at it until they dragged it over the side of the basket, when the bottom of the bag came out, and the fruit flecked the floor with red and gold. Oh, the bliss of picking up those apples; of comparing one with another—of running to the mother and asking which was the biggest and which the reddest and most beautifully streaked!

"There must have been some mistake," the poor woman kept murmuring as she examined the baskets and found how liberal and varied was the supply, "for who could or would have been so kind?"

"Why, mommie," said little Sue, reproachfully. "Santa Claus bought 'em. Haven't you always told us that Santa Claus liked to make us happy?"

The long exiled father felt that he could restrain himself but a few moments longer, and he was glad to see that the rest of his purchases were at the door. With a look so intent, and yearning concentration of thought so intense, that it was strange that they could not feel his presence, he bent his eyes once more upon a scene that would imprint itself upon his memory forever.

But while he stood there another scene came before his mental vision. Oddly enough his thought went back to that far-off Southern brookside, where he had lain with his hands in the cool water. He leaned against the window-casing, with the Northern snow whirling about his head, but he breathed the balmy breath of a Southern forest, the mocking-bird sang in the trees overhead, and he could—so it seemed to him—actually feel the water-worn pebbles under his palms as he watched the life-blood ebbing from his side. Then there was a dim consciousness of rough but kindly arms bearing him through the underbrush, and, more distinctly, the memory of weary weeks of convalescence in a mountaineer's cabin. All these scenes of peril, before he finally reached the Union lines, passed before him as he stood in a species of trance beside the window of his home.

But the half-grown boys sent from the restaurant and toy-shop could not be mistaken for Santa Claus even by the credulous fancy of the children, and Mrs. Marlow stepped forward eagerly and said:

"I am sure there is some mistake. You are certainly leaving these articles at the wrong house." The faces of the children began to grow anxious and troubled also, for even their faith could not accept such marvelous good fortune. Jamie looked at the sled with a kind of awe, and saw at a glance that it was handsomer than any in the street. "Mr. Lansing, a wealthy man, lives a little farther up the street," Mrs. Marlow began to urge, "and these things must be meant—"

"Isn't your name Mrs. Anson Marlow?" asked the boy from the restaurant.

"Yes."

"Then I must do as I've been told;" and he opened



"WHY! IT'S SANTA CLAUS!"

his tray and placed the turkey, the ham and the coffee on the table.

"If he's right, I'm right, too," said he of the toy-shop. "Them was my directions;" and they were both about to depart when the woman sprang forward and gasped :

"Stay!"

She put her hand on her side and trembled violently.

"Who sent these things?" she faltered.

"Our bosses, mum," replied the boy from the restaurant, hesitatingly.

She sprang toward him, seized his arm, and looked imploringly into his face. "Who ordered them sent?" she asked in a low, passionate voice.

The young fellow began to smile, and stammered awkwardly, "I don't think I'm to tell."

She released his arm, and glanced around with a look of intense expectation.

"Oh, oh!" she gasped, with quick, short sobs, "can

it be—" Then she sprang to the door, opened it, and looked out into the black, stormy night. What seemed a shadow rushed toward her, she felt herself falling, but strong arms caught and bore her, half fainting, to a lounge within the room.

Many have died from sorrow, but few from joy. With her husband's arms around her Mrs. Marlow's weakness soon passed. In response to his deep, earnest tones of soothing and entreaty, she speedily opened her eyes and gave him a smile so full of content and unutterable joy that all anxiety in her behalf began to pass from his mind.

"Yes," she said softly, "I can live now. It seems as if a new and stranger life were coming back with every pulse."

The young fellows who had been the bearers of the gifts were so touched that they drew their rough sleeves across their eyes as they hastened away, closing the door on the happiest family in the city.

THE CHRISTMAS OF A POOR OLD SOUL.

BY NATHAN ROUNS.

I.—A LITTLE SEGMENT OF THE PRESENT.

OLD PTOCHOI was a poor old soul. It was Christmas Eve, but he did not enjoy the season. He never had done so in all his life. He had found it impossible to live upon one dollar a day, and had long ago passed the age of forty years without accumulating a competency. According to the Christless and inhuman dictum ascribed to one of the most distinguished of our modern ecclesiastics, therefore, he was not fit to live at all. But he did live, nevertheless, and God (who, thank Heaven ! is not an ecclesiastic) had borne with him very patiently. In fact old Ptochoi was nigh upon four score, and from his childhood he had known nothing but work, work, work. Hard work ; first, to raise, feed, clothe and educate, to the best of his slender ability, the numerous children whom, in the innocence of his heart, he supposed God to have given him. The children ! "Blessed is he that hath his quiver full of them !" So say the Scriptures, and pious old Ptochoi never thought of questioning the truth and wisdom of the sacred word.

The night had fallen, and the bright wintry stars glinted down through the darkness. Long lines of gas-light lined the seemingly endless streets of the great

city. The mellow light gushed out of illuminated windows, and poured along the snowy pavements. But the Poor Old Soul sat by his wretched little fire, in his miserable little room, and his heart was heavy with sorrow. Three of the children huddled together near the half-heated stove in a vain attempt to keep themselves comfortably warm. The fourth and eldest one, a girl of thirteen, upon whom malicious nature had conferred a delicate, aristocratic beauty, as if in scorn of her miserable experience and surroundings, was still absent on an errand undertaken to collect the wages due to poor old Ptochoi for certain wood carvings wrought by his feeble and trembling hands. Notwithstanding their extreme poverty, the little ones were eagerly discussing the question whether Santa Claus would come to them that night ; and Ptochoi, the poor old soul, could not tell them, for he did not have a shilling in the world. In the midst of their eager speculations upon the great question whether he would come or not, the young and beautiful girl, Hope, came into the room, and gliding up to old Ptochoi, with love and reverence in her beaming face, she slipped into his hand the coins which he had been doubtfully expecting. Old Ptochoi took them with a deep sigh of



"IT IS GETTING TO BE QUITE COMFORTABLE HERE," SAID THE LITTLE MAN.

relief, and told the children that, after thinking it all over, he was pretty confident that Santa Claus would come. Then the sweet, young, but already motherly Hope (oh, how soon the daughters of the pious poor acquire that divine motherliness from their constant care and self-denial in behalf of the younger children!) took from under her thin, cheap shawl a bundle wrapped in a newspaper, saying : "Yes, grandpa, the gentleman made me wait a good while in the hall, but it was warm and nice. He said the carving was good, and gave me the money. Then a beautiful young lady—oh, so finely dressed!—came in and told me to wait until she came back; and when she came she gave me a lot of cakes and candy and nuts and oranges for the little ones. Oh, grandpa, they are nice folks, although they are so rich!"

The little ones were delighted with the unaccustomed luxuries which Hope had brought to them, and chatted long and merrily while they devoured the charitable supplies. But Ptochoi, poor old soul, while he was grateful for the rich young lady's thoughtful remembrance of his little ones, was full of trouble. At last, however, he took down his old Bible, read his chapter aloud and reverently; prayed in simple, pleading, heart-warm words, and then the children huddled up in their poor but clean little bed like lambs, because of the cold, and quickly fell asleep, to dream, perhaps, of Santa Claus. But Ptochoi, poor old soul, sat long by the pitiful fire, and his heart was full of trouble.

"Ha! ha! ha! You can't understand it, eh, neighbor? Well, I have just stepped in to explain it to you."

These words, and the mocking, bitter little laugh by which they were accompanied, roused old Ptochoi from his painful meditations, and looking about he saw by the dim light of the miserable fire, a queer-looking little man, with a pleasant, cunning face, sitting cross-legged, like a tailor, on the top of the stove, and gazing at him with a quizzical, mocking smile. Old Ptochoi had not heard the little man come, and did not know who he was; but, seeing him sitting on top of the stove, he said :

"Take a chair, sir. You will burn yourself if you sit there."

"Don't trouble yourself," laughed the little man; "don't trouble yourself! I am used to a warmer climate than this, and I brought some good Pittsburg coal along with me. I see that you are in trouble. You can't understand the matter at all, and I have stepped in to explain it to you. Just wait a minute, please."

The little man sprang up and tumbled big, gleaming lumps of beautiful black coal into the stove, crammed it down with his hands, opened the draft wide, and then resumed his place, sitting cross-legged upon the top of the fast-heating stove.

"You can't understand it. Ho! ho! ho! Can't understand it at all. Ha! ha! ha! Well, I have just stopped to explain it to you," cried the merry little man, with that light, mocking laugh that seemed to be habitual with him.

"I can't understand what?" said old Ptochoi. "I said nothing about not understanding anything."

"Oh, I know," laughed the little man, "I know. You said nothing about it, but you thought a great deal! I know, and I want to explain it to you, if you are willing to have a friend teach you something valuable."

"How do you know what I thought?" said the Poor Old Soul. "What did I think?"

"That's it! That's just it!" said the little man. "Now we shall get along finely. I'll tell you what you

thought. You thought: 'There is a great and cruel wrong somewhere, and I don't know where it is. The men that build the palaces live in wretched little rooms. The men that build the cities and railroads get but a bare subsistence by their labors. The men that manufacture the fine silks, and linen, and cloth, and all that pertains to ease and comfort and elegance, never enjoy the fruits of their toil, and lead lives of labor, privation and self-denial. The men that create all the wealth of the world get but a pitiful portion of its good things, while the men who do no labor enjoy everything. Certificates of stock, mere pieces of paper, accidental rank or position, even in the hands of the idle, the vicious or the profligate, command greater blessings than labor can ever gain. All the advantages of human life seem naturally to accrue to the unworthy, and the terrible progress of mankind is crushing the logic out of the poor.' This was your thought," laughed the little man; "this was your thought, and your thought was true. Ha! ha! ha! Your thought was true. The father of the girl who sent the nick-nacks to your grandchildren to-night made seventy-five thousand dollars in three hours this morning by 'a nice little corner' in wheat. He is a gentleman, and never did an honest day's work in his life. You have toiled diligently for seventy-five years, have led a life of honest, sober, ceaseless labor, like a Christian slave, as you are; and what have you got to show for it? Ha! ha! ha! What have you got to show for it?" laughed the little man mockingly.

Then the Poor Old Soul answered: "Yes; I was thinking just about in that way. The distribution of all temporal blessings does seem to me to be most cruelly and unjustly made! But God is good and wise, though I cannot understand it at all." And the Poor Old Soul sighed wearily.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the little man. "It is getting to be quite comfortable here, I declare! You can't understand it? Ha! ha! ha! I will explain it to you in a minute. Now, look you,"—and old Ptochoi did look. The room was warmer than he had ever known it to be at Christmas-time before, for Pittsburg coal costs money. The stove was red-hot; the little man's feet and ankles were red-hot; and a gentle glow irradiated his cunning face, as if he were about to become red-hot all over. Though old Ptochoi was filled with amazement, he said nothing, and the little man continued; "Look you, now! The reason you can't understand it—the reason you have been miserably poor through all your long life of honest toil and pious self-denial is just this—you have been worshipping the wrong God! That is what is the matter with you, don't you see? The God you worship is the God of the Poor. He never asked any except the weary and heavy-laden to come unto Him! He refuses to let any rich man into His kingdom. The fundamental law of His worship is that whoever would become His disciple must give up his possessions for the good of all. Hence, if a man worship Him in downright earnest, he is just dead certain to have his nose to the grindstone all his life, just as you have done! He never helps His worshippers in any practical, common-sense way. You have been serving Him faithfully all your days, and what have you got to show for it? There is enough and to spare in the world, but it is not put into a common stock, as He ordained. So the sharp dogs get all the meat and leave you real Christians nothing but the bone. Don't you see? Now, the other one pays cash, don't you see? He don't ask anybody to worship him for nothing. The shrewd, sensible people worship the other one, and they are rewarded with all life's blessings, don't you see?"

This is the trouble with you: You have been worshipping the wrong God, which is the silliest thing a man can do. You could not understand it! Ha! ha! ha! Could not understand it at all! But I explain: You have been worshipping the wrong God—the one that demands exclusive, sincere and constant devotion, but pays nothing for it. Ha! ha! Pays nothing! That is what is the matter with you!" And the little man laughed delightedly.

Then said old Ptochoi solemnly: "I worship the only true God—the right God. I worship the Lord Je—"

But the little man interrupted him, laughing nervously and exclaiming: "No names, if you please! No names! I know whom you mean, but call no names!"

"I worship Him," said the Poor Old Soul! "

"But he is not the right one," laughed the little man. "He said, 'Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you,' but you know that's a lie! You have done that all your life, and nothing has been added unto you. But the other one adds, multiplies, divides, does everything possible for those who worship him. He has all the rich, respectable people—the shrewd, intelligent, moneyed men—the only people that really live at all; for the toiling millions are only slaves. You see if you had worshipped the other one with half the zeal and earnestness with which you have adored Him, you might have had houses, lands and money, name, offices and influence. Your beautiful little grandchild might be the belle of the city, and the other children leaders of social life, patrons of the churches, members of 'the upper ten,' the lights of the best circle. But you have worshipped the wrong God. Ha! ha! ha! And what have you got to show for it? Ha! ha! ha!" And the little man hugged his red-hot knees and laughed merrily and mockingly.

The Poor Old Soul was for a moment dumfounded by the strange words and actions of the curious little man, and looked upon him wonderingly, while a strong suspicion of his guest's identity took possession of him. But presently he said:

"And who is the other one, that pays cash and renders aid to all who worship him?"

"O," said the little man, "he is the only god for a sensible man to worship! He is an old friend of mine, and I hope you may yet know him, for I dislike to see a clever, honest man like you wearing out his life in the cruel and unprofitable service of my friend's worst enemy. The name of the kind, benevolent god who rewards his worshippers with all the choicest blessings of this life is an ancient and honorable one. We call him Mammon, and his worship is pleasant and profitable. But that other one—bah! what a dog's life they lead who really worship him!"

"Yet many who believe as I do," said the Poor Old Soul, "are rich and happy! Look at the beautiful churches! Look at the well-dressed congregations! Look at the sums expended in charities and missions! Look at the salaries paid to the preachers! Surely all who believe as I do are not poor, and old, and toil-worn!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the little man. "Believe as you do, is it? Ha! ha! ha! that suits me exactly! I don't care a nickle what they believe, so long as they do just what the fashionable churches practice! Why, the Jews always gave ten per cent—were compelled by law to give it—but we don't do any such thing. Let them believe just what they please. It is all right so long as they serve Mammon and practice usury, extortion, war and slavery! It don't make any difference to

me what they believe, so long as what they do suits my notion! Although you are a poor old soul, it is not too late for you to mend your ways! Curse the one who has never moved his little finger to give you any help, although you have served him like a slave for the better part of a century, and try the worship of Mammon for awhile! Do something for little Hope and the other darlings before you die, and abandon all these sickly sentimentalisms that unfit a man for the active business of life! Bestir yourself, and I will aid you, although you have been such a poor old soul."

"And in what way might I commence the worship of the other?" asked the Poor Old Soul, eyeing the little man suspiciously.

"O, there are many ways," said he. "For instance, the gentleman who paid Hope your pitiful earnings tonight make a mistake in the amount. He gave her one gold-piece when it ought to have been silver; but a man who scooped up nearly a hundred thousand this morning will never miss it, and you might keep the gold by way of making a beginning. They all do it. No man ever accumulated any great fortune without doing something of the kind. Or, as you are a man of life-long integrity and above suspicion, utilize the confidence fools have in you. They all do it. The same man who paid the gold, by mistake bought a little casket that you can carry in your pocket as a Christmas gift for his daughter. It contains fifty thousand dollars' worth of diamonds. You take the gold-piece back now and restore that to him, and when you go out through the side entrance, leading from the servants' hall, as all poor old souls like you must when they visit so fine a house, slip your hand through the window on the west side of the hall, pick up the casket and bring it away with you. It is the beginning of your fortune, and as soon as you shall have made a start, a man of your brains and character can find a hundred chances to make your little fortune grow. Mammon tells the truth when he says that 'to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance.' Don't you see? a little Mammon-worship would make your old age comfortable, and raise your grandchildren to a respectable position in society?"

Then the Poor Old Soul was convulsed with righteous indignation, and he cried out: "I believe thou art a devil! In the name of Jesus Christ, my Master, depart from me, Satan! For, though He slay me, yet will I trust in him!"

The little man shivered as if he were very cold, although he was red-hot up to the waist, when he heard these words. Then he jumped into the fire and ran up the flue, and left the Poor Old Soul alone.

II.—A SEGMENT OF THE PAST.

Poor old Ptochoi, in his dull, plodding life, had been so little accustomed to strong excitement, and he was withal so feeble, that when the little man vanished he let his head fall on the back of his chair, and straightened himself out stiff and white. The poor old soul came out of him, and might have got lost, I reckon, if it had not happened that just then a glorious presence gleamed through the dim light in the room, hovering over him with balanced pinions and pitying face, and caught up the Poor Old Soul and clasped it to his radiant breast. Now, any one who had ever been familiarly acquainted with the angels (as the late Mr. Longfellow was) could have told in a minute that the glorious stranger was none other than "Sandalphon, the Angel of Glory—Sandalphon, the Angel of Prayer."

He said to the Poor Old Soul: "Satan hath showed

thee, with cruel vividness, what misguided men are doing in the name of Jesus. I will bear thee hence to ancient Mæsia, and show thee what Christianity hath done, and will do again, in the same Holy Name. Only remember thou that the limitations of time and place fetter the body alone, and not the spirit; so that as we speed along through Heaven we shall go back through vanished ages; and when we reach the mountain Hæmus, above the Danube, we shall also have reached the age of Ulphilas, the Gothic bishop, who translated the Scriptures into that now extinct language. These things I show to comfort thee."

So away went Sandalphon, bearing aloft the Poor Old Soul closely clasped to his angelic bosom, and any one who has ever traveled with an angel need not be told that the vast distance was speedily and pleasantly accomplished.

"Look thou," said Sandalphon, "and mark well all that thou mayst see!"

And the Poor Old Soul gazed down from the angel's bosom and beheld such things as these: A whole nation, men, women and children, flocks and herds, swept over Northern Italy with fire and sword, spreading death, rapine and robbery throughout the land; a nation coming none knew whence, fierce, bloodthirsty, barbarians and pagans, every man of them, all murderers, robbers, thieves and plunderers; havoc marked their pathway, and desolated Italy shook with terror wherever the clangor of their savage arms gave forth the signal for slaughter and devastation. At last, satiated with blood and plunder, they turned their faces toward the Dacian forests, bearing many Italian captives on their triumphant march into hopeless slavery, in accordance with the devilish practice which then prevailed in war. Some of these captives were Christians, among them a woman of the Marcomanians, of whom was born Ulphilas, the Gothic bishop. This boy, reared by his Christian mother, was taught the simple system of primitive Christianity, as it was before Constantine subverted the Gospel and set up an established church in place of it; and he grew in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Born a slave, he converted his master to Christianity, and at once became free, because the elementary principles of the Kingdom of Heaven are logically and practically subversive of *all* slavery. Afterwards, he proclaimed the Gospel with power and holiness, and multitudes of the barbarians believed. These brave, honest, simple-minded men went forward at once to *do* the things which they were taught by the Gospel, in which they had learned to believe; and speedily they professed faith in Christ as a divine saviour and teacher: they abolished slavery; they adopted community of property and of rights for all; they abandoned war and refused to bear arms; they established monogamic marriages as a sacrament of religion, making the family the unit of society, of which the churches were the aggregate; and so set up "the Kingdom of Heaven" in the land of Mæsia.

The Poor Old Soul watched with wonder and delight the rapid and beautiful process by which, in the lifetime of a single man, Ulphilas, a nation of fierce, pagan barbarians was converted into peaceful, industrious, prosperous Christian communities. All that he saw was beautiful and pure as an ideal civilization, and much that he beheld was so strange as to be unintelligible to him.

"How," said the Poor Old Soul unto the angel, "did he so quickly convert whole families and communities—barbarian chieftains and their untamed followers?"

"By means of miracles which he used as the evi-

dence of the divinity of our Lord—the only testimony competent to prove so grand a truth, and the only argument Jesus ever authorized His followers to adduce," answered Sandalphon.

"If Ulphilas wrought these miracles, how and when did miracles cease? and why cannot the churches today do the same wonderful works in attestation of the truth?"

"The bishop received the Gospel uncorrupted by man. His first converts were in real earnest, and organized the church upon the foundation Christ himself ordained, excluding therefrom war, slavery, polygamy, extortion, oppression, and founding a Gothic Kingdom of Heaven upon the basis of the early Christian community of goods and faith—the strong, redeeming democracy of Jesus, in which the power to work miracles inheres.

"Where" said the Poor Old Soul, "are their jails? their soldiers? their policemen? their judges?—where is the whole machinery of government necessary to control a people just emerged from barbarism?"

"All these things ceased to exist," said Sandalphon, "with the abrogation of the idolatry of Mammon, which alone renders them necessary. The only possible need of government over a people is to maintain the idolatries of Mammon, and wherever Christianity is really established and idolatry abolished, faith is sufficient to regulate the ethics of mankind, and government over the people becomes a useless and farcical thing, as thou seest it would be for this nation."

"There are no rich among them, nor any that are poor," said the Poor Old Soul. "Who, then, are their great men, their respectable people?"

"He that is greatest among them is the servant of all," answered Sandalphon. "They are most esteemed who accomplish the most good for the community. The sole object of the fundamental law of Christ's kingdom—community of right and property, 'the communion of saints'—was to overthrow the selfishness which is the curse of the world. The stronghold of selfishness, the citadel in which it hath always fortified itself, is Mammon worship, the only idolatry which Jesus ever denounced by name. Under the teachings of Ulphilas, these barbarians adopted the democracy of Jesus, and the speedy result is this perfect, clean and prosperous civilization which thou beholdest with such joy."

"Oh," said the Poor Old Soul, "it is so perfect, so beautiful, that if I could only bring hither Hope and the little ones, I would nevermore desire to leave this glorious Christian commonwealth!"

"That may not be," said Sandalphon, "for this civilization perished centuries ago, overthrown and almost exterminated, in the *name of Christ*. Ulphilas was charged with following the heresies of Arius, though Arius himself, whatever may be thought of his philosophizing, was a Christian, who gave his whole life to the work of our Lord, holding back nothing that he had. Besides," continued the angel, "I must now restore thee to thine own age and country, for it is not good for such a poor old soul to be too long absent from its body."

And the strong angel winged his glorious flight back to America, bearing the Poor Old Soul clasped safely in his radiant arms, and quickly returned it to the worn old tenement of clay.

III.—A SEGMENT OF THE FUTURE.

OLD Ptochoi slept; but the strange scenes of which he had been a witness pursued him even in his sleep. In his dreams he thought that his powers of vision were

exalted until the range thereof took in the whole continent; and casting his rejoicing eyes over our own proud land his poor old heart thrilled with rapture at the sights which met his gaze; and this was what he saw: From ocean to ocean, the broad and beautiful land lay widespread beneath his wondering eyes, and the peace of God brooded like a perfect and unfading summer over mountain, vale and prairie. Happy and prosperous farmers tilled the fertile and generous fields; prosperous and happy workmen guided the flying trains that sped across the land on journeys of business or of pleasure, and there was glory in the floating clouds of steam and music in the whirring wheels. Everywhere and in every department of labor and of trade, glad hearts and willing hands plied the grand and multifrom machinery which swelled the "Anvil Chorus" of a vast national industry; and the sighs of pain and mutterings of discontent and poverty which once rendered every scene of toil as hateful as Satan's own workshop, had given place to songs of gladness and triumphant hymns of praise. The rich men at one end of the vast thoroughfares of toil, and the humblest of their employés at the other, seemed to be animated by the same desire to accomplish useful work; and in place of being hopelessly at enmity with each other, had become mutual friends, hoping and praying for each other's welfare and uniting in a common effort, each according to the abilities which God had bestowed upon him, to accomplish the greatest good of the greatest number, and thereby develop a perfect civilization.

The Poor Old Soul flushed and trembled with a sacred joy as he beheld the rapturous scene; and then, as if in answer to his wonder and yearning after the redeeming truth, the mystic hands of Hope and Faith played with the moonbeams of the wintry night, and of the silvery gleaming rays wove ladders reaching up from earth to heaven, by which a throng of shining spirits came and went. And it seemed to him that the celestial visitors, poised on their stainless pinions in the chill midnight air, did chant words in accents of divinest melody that in our human speech were like to such as these:

"Behold our 'Israel restored'
Here brave men dared to learn and do
All that is ordainéd by our Lord
To bless the many and the few!
The good, the beautiful, the true,
What to thy glad heart hath appeared,
To slow but sure perfectness grew;
Sown, nurtured, strengthened by His word!
Free thought changed law to justice; then
Peace crowned the works of Christian men!

"Their first grand step was hopeful flight,
From ancient tyranny and might,
To the New World, whose virgin sod
They claimed for Liberty and God,
And builded better than they knew
On simple, grand organic laws,
That wrought, like an eternal cause,
The good, the beautiful, the true?

"The first great lesson which they sought
To issue, coined to golden speech,
Was but the strong and saving thought
Which Christ did to the many teach:
'All true and lawful government
Is built on faith in man—consent.
The people are the sourcee of power.'
A truth that tore the crown of thorns
From labor's forehead in an hour,
In spite of royal hates and scorns.

"They made it good with sword and gun!
Their shed blood cleansed the ancient crime!

And outlawed Liberty begun
A new life, grand, serene, sublime;
And listening, awe-struck nations heard
The true translation of His word:
'The good, the beautiful, the true,
Is for the many and the few.'

"Deep in the same organic law
They laid the second truth divine:
'All free and equal.' When they saw
That ancient custom drew a line,
Broad, hateful, black, across the face
Of this redeeming truth, they rose,
Led by His faith, helped by His grace,
And blotted from the gaze of Heaven
Their ancient sin of Slavery,
And prayed: 'Now let us be forgiven!
Blood hath been shed, but all are free!'"

And, as the dim light of Christmas morning began to struggle across the waking world, the celestial visitors united in chanting the following words:

"The soul is more than meat and bread!
A man is better than a beast!
A holy thing well done, well said,
Is better than a Sabian feast,
Or any dogma of the Priest.

"When men shall learn the worth of man,
The same strong faith that forced the slave
From Mammon's malison and base
Shall set men free, redeem and save:
Such is the promise that He gave.

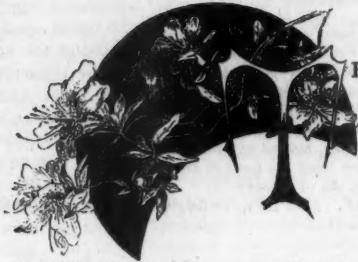
"For there are better things than Power,
Or Wealth, or Fame: the Master pays
No price for any Passion flower:
'For he that loveth and obeys
Is greater than a king,' He says!

"Sure as the Lord was born to-day
All forms of wrong shall fade away!
Lift up an eye in faith, and see
That Christmas is a prophecy,
That even Labor shall be free!"

Then the light grew stronger, and the Poor Old Soul awoke with a heart full of purer joy than any former Christmas had ever brought him. And long before the children had shaken off their innocent sleep, Ptochoi went forth into the city and purchased such gifts for them as his slender means enabled him to place to the credit of Santa Claus. His soul was so full of holy joy because of all that he had seen that night that even the little ones felt the influence of his abounding peace, and there was a strange thrill and music in his trembling voice as he bade them, and all to whom he spoke that day, a Merry Christmas! But he told no man that it was because of the angel. Yet, by-and-by he began to talk of those things which he thought he had seen, and tried to sing the songs he thought that he had heard. But his voice was cracked, and people said sometimes that his head was cracked too. How much of it was true and how much was phantasy no man can tell; but when Old Ptochoi went the next day and gave back to the Rich Man the Twenty Dollar gold piece he had given to Hope, mistaking it for Silver, the Rich Man did not speak to him harshly, but bade him to sit at meat with him that Christmas Day, and when he had eaten his fill he gave him four more golden pieces like the first, and sent him away in great amazement, declaring that the angel had spoken truly, and that the time of which he spake was near at hand. Before the Christmas came again the Rich Man and the Poor Old Soul had journeyed with the Angel once more, and came not back again to tell what they saw or heard.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

BY HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.



tains, having fought through the four years, and during part of the time served in the same division in Florida.

He had been wounded in the battle of Olustee and barely recovered, and I had somewhat impaired my strength by the labors and exposures of camp-life, so that both of us had been told by a physician that we must take a period of rest and recreation; and, since we had known something of Florida as a scene of labor and danger, we resolved to test its capacities for recreation and enjoyment. And certainly, if one wishes to find a land where the mere fact of existence becomes a sense of enjoyment, I can think of none under the sun that insures this so completely as Florida. Our camping days there recur to me as a dream of delicious air, blue skies, luxuriant verdure, innumerable singing-birds and a blissful feeling of delightful repose that gave an added charm to every beauty.

I had secured in Jacksonville the services of a man who owned a little schooner on the St. John's River, which he was only too happy to place at our entire disposal for the compensation that we agreed upon. He was a little, wiry, lively body, somewhere about sixty years of age, with a crop of stiff, iron-gray hair and a stubby beard, a round, compact head, and little, glittering, bead-like eyes—a man who had invested his whole heart and soul in his schooner, and who gauged everything natural or moral by its adaptation to put a little good carrying business into his way.

I had some difficulty at first in reconciling my friend Charley to the man. He seemed inclined to contemplate the little skipper's frank, outspoken selfishness from the moral point of view, while to me it was only an amusing study of human nature.

Charley was a Boston boy—an enthusiastic disciple of Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner—and had engaged in the war with all the fervor of a Crusader. His only fault was that he lived too high in the realms of the moral sublime to be exactly fitted to deal with poor, commonplace, everyday mortals on earth. So when he began to remark upon our skipper, I was obliged to take him to task.

"My dear fellow, in getting through this world we must see who and what we have to deal with and not be disgusted because they *are* what they are. This little man is perfectly *au fait* in all that is necessary in running a schooner for a fishing and camping excursion. He knows the best fishing-grounds, the best bait, the best tackle—he knows every good stopping-place and all the etceteras of camping. He is good-natured and honest, and will do well by us, but he knows no more of fine sentiment or high ideals than your pointer dog does of Longfellow's poems. You are fond of your dog, though

he cannot comprehend Evangeline, in the same way, and you can live in charity with our skipper."

This reminder was the more necessary as the little man had quite a fondness for talking and a great fund of incident and story which I was desirous of drawing forth; and if I had not bound over Charley to a course of toleration, we should have missed several good legends, and, among others, the Florida ghost story which I am now about to relate as nearly as possible in the terms in which our little skipper rehearsed it to us as we sat around our camp-fire, in a palmetto hummock, a little above Palatka.

Our camp-fire streamed up, well fed with pitch-pine knots, and illuminated a scene weird and fantastic enough. A few gigantic live-oaks were grouped on one side of the picture, and the heavy hanging drapery of Spanish moss looked, in the firelight, like stalactites hanging from the roof of a great cave. The tall palmetto trees rose in graceful pillars around us, and their broad, feathery tops formed a roof of shelter overhead and seemed to render the tents we carried superfluous. Although it was the middle of February, the air was clear and balmy, without even the suggestion of a chill. My friend Charley, stretched out by the fire and reclining with one elbow on a heap of gray moss, surveyed the scene with the satisfaction of a connoisseur.

"The only thing Florida wants is more history and legend and story," said he. "The scenery is unequalled, but it isn't as it is in Europe, where there is some story or legend at every turn."

Our skipper, who had been industriously washing and arranging our supper-dishes, now came to the front. He considered it part of his duty to show that Florida was not wanting in anything under the sun that any country on earth could supply.

"I'm sure," said he, "there are *stories* enough about Florida, if folks only know'd 'em. Florida is the oldest settled state in the Union, and there's allers been something a happenin' here. What with Spanish and French and Injuns, there's stories about everywhere thick as palmetto sprouts. I could tell you a story now, about a place you've sailed right by on this river—a regular old-fashioned ghost story, that would make the hair rise on a feller's head."

"Well, tell us then," said I. "It is exactly what we want to hear. So sit down and go at it."

"Wal, now," he said, sitting down and embracing his knees with his arms, looking like an active grasshopper in a conversational attitude, "this 'ere story is what I am knowing to myself, and I'll tell you all about it, but I shan't tell you no names—cause there's folks now livin' wouldn't like it if it got into the papers, and most everything does get into the papers now-a-days."

"There's a p'int on this river, that we sailed by yesterday, where there's a nice, comfortable house that used to be lived in, and now it stands all solitary and goin' to ruin, jest because it's haunted, so that no mortal can stand it to live there."

"Tell us the story of this haunted house," said I, stirring up the fire and throwing on an extra pine knot.

"Wal, ye see, there was the Ginal—I shan't mention no names—but the Ginal was the greatest man

in these parts in the old times here. He had a place down on Fort George Island, and he owned a tract of some ten thousand acres on the St. John's—good, prime land—where you could grow the long, staple cotton and sugar cane. Now, the General he was a drivin' kind o' predominatin' man; he wanted to do things on a grand scale. He didn't want any o'yer little, fiddlin' plantations; he wanted to live like a prince, and work seven hundred niggers, and make things spin when he took hold. Wal, you see, them Northern fellers up there in Virginny and the Car'lynys and so on wanted to trade off their spare niggers to Florida, and ask what they was a mind to for 'em, too; so that it made stockin' a plantation come to an awful high figure, and the General he warn't a-goin' to pay 'em their prices, so he 'greed with a slaver cap'n, and used to get in his hands from Africa. Ye see, the folks there at Washington had agreed to put down the slave trade, and they passed a law makin' on it piracy to bring 'em in, but the old General he didn't care for that. He knew that there was plenty of places all along the coast where ships could run in and land their cargo and slip off, and nobody be the wiser; and that's what he did; he got in lots of prime niggers right over from Africa, and nobody dared say a word about it.

"But the General had a quarrel with his brother-in-law, the Captain—your see their places jined—and the Captain he was pretty spirity and high-tempered, and when there came up questions between 'em he didn't like the General's predominatin' ways. The fact was the General was jest the devil himself to get along with. Now, there was a question between 'em about a nigger of the General's, that married one o' the Captain's women, and so the Captain he tried to buy him, and thought he had bought him, and the nigger had gone over on to his place to live, when there was some fuss about paying the price, and the General said the bargain was off, and sent and took the nigger, and they brought him back to the General. He sat there on his veranda when they brought him up, and the General asked him 'what he was over there for.'

"Wal, the darkey he said, 'I thought I was the Cap'n's nigger, and not your'n.'

"Wal," says the General, "I'll mark ye, and ye'll know whose nigger you are after this;" and with that he cut with his knife and slashed his ear off, and then he give him a shove and told him to go 'long to quarters. Wal, he give him such a hard push, and the fel-

low's hands were tied so he couldn't save himself, and he fell head first down the veranda steps and broke his neck and killed him; so that was the end o' him."

"By thunder!" said Charley, with a sudden start.

"Wal, now—yis, that are was putty steep doin's," said our skipper; "everybody said so, but nobody dar'st to do nothin' about it, 'cause they didn't want to tackle the General. But his brother-in-law he jest writ to Washington about how the General was bringin' in slave ships, and they started a ship-o'-war to cruise around the Florida coast.

"Wal, the General he come to me one night to go to a place on the river and take off a lot o' niggers he'd got hid up there, and carry 'em down to his plantation. It was full moon then, and bright as daylight, and I took aboard six strapping fellows, the last of a lot that he'd jest got in from a slaver. All the rest was safe and sound on his plantation, workin' steady and regular, and if he only got these in, why the thing was done.

"Wal, we had jest the right wind, and we sailed along calm and steady till we got a little past Black Point, and we see a fellow in a skiff making off from the shore, and waving his handkercher at us. Come to look, it was Tom Hyer, and he come aboard all out o' breath. 'General,' says he, 'there's a government steamer at the bar, and they've sent the long boat with a full crew of fellows to take you, and they're rowing down here jest



THE SKIPPER.

as fast as they can. They'll be on you in half an hour.'

"Wal, the Gineral looked like a thunder-cloud, and he swore like thunder; but I says to him, says I, 'Gineral, there ain't but one thing to do: we's got fifteen feet o' water here, and we must jest tumble the critters overboard—dead men tell no tales.'

"Wal, the Gineral see there warn't no two ways about it, and we begun and throw'd 'em over, and the shackles on 'em sunk 'em right down like lead. But there was one big fellow—a Mandingo nigger—he made fight, and when the Gineral come to him he jest snapped at his hand like a tiger, and bit right through the fleshy part till his teeth met.

"Wal, it took two or three good knocks on the critter's head to get him to let go—but we tumbled him in last of all. He was an awful feller that. His eyes they seemed to snap fire, and he looked as if he could have torn us to pieces, like a wild beast—but we got him overboard spite of his strugglin', and I drew a long breath when I see him sink.

"There," says I, "Gineral, now that's over; now let's get out the fishing-tackle and we'll be catchin' sheep-head. And so we did. Tom he got into his skiff and

rowed back, and it warn't more than a quarter of an hour before, sure enough, the long boat came around the p'int makin' right straight for us. We took it all quite cool; they come alongside and asked what we was doing, and we told 'em we was fishing, and some of 'em came aboard and seemed mighty curious, and looked all over the schooner, but didn't find nothin'.

"They said they'd just come out for a row up river to see how things looked on the St. John's and enjoy the moonlight, and pretty soon they turned around and began rowin' back again. The Gineral he set his teeth and looked after 'em. 'I bet I know who set 'em on,' says he, 'but he didn't catch us this time. The fellows are safe enough at the bottom of the river; they'll never rise to tell on us, and the garfish and alligators will soon finish what's left of 'em.'

"That's what he said, but I guess he didn't know jest what he was a talkin' about, for from that very night the Gineral's house was haunted so there warn't no peace nor rest in it. That Mandingo fellow was seen all around the place, appearin' now here and now there, and scowling and threatening so that the Gineral's wife and children was scared almost into fits. Why, sometimes the Gineral would feel his hand sting jest as when



"I THOUGHT I WAS THE CAP'N'S NIGGER."

he was bit, and wake and find that Mandingo bendin' over him ; and then people heard chains rattlin' and scrapin', and groans and sort o' choking, gurgling sounds like people drowning ; and the fact was the General give up living there and moved off to his place on Fort George Island. He tried to get the overseer to live there. But the overseer couldn't stand it, and now nobody lives in it and nobody wants to go a-nigh it after dark."

"Good," said my friend Charley, with a deep intonation ; "the Lord be praised for that."

The skipper looked at him with a curious, inquiring twinkle in his little gray eyes.

"Harry," Charley continued, laying a hand on my shoulder, "I'm getting orthodox. I believe in hell—there must, there ought to be a hell."

"Oh, of course, we all believe in hell," said the little skipper ; "everybody does. Oh, yes, I'm orthodox. I belong to the Methodist church."

Charley looked like a full-charged thunder-cloud, but I laid my hand on his arm. "Don't waste your powder, Charley," I said ; "if the Lord can have patience we can, and if He is slow He is sure."

"Amen!" said Charley, with fervor, as we turned in for the night.



A DIRGE FOR SUMMER.

We bind the reeds of Summer
In pipes for Autumn's song,
As if, with breath
Of love, cold death
Could be delayed for long.

We wear the garb of Summer,
Twine wreaths upon our head ;
The same moon glows,
The river flows,
But Summer's glory 's fled.
MARIA OAKLEY DEWING.

THE HOUSEHOLD—LODGINGS IN ENGLAND.

THERE cannot be a more cosy, comfortable way of living outside of one's own home than in pleasant, tidy lodgings. With us in America, when one wants to stay a short time in a place, there is no choice except a hotel or a boarding-house. In small towns the former is not always a delightful abode, and in cities if it is good it is expensive. Even when the question of expense is not an important one there is something in the noise and bustle of a large hotel that is very trying to a delicate person or one in need of rest. Boarding-houses follow the same rule; the cheap ones are insufferable, and to live at a first-rate one costs a fortune. There is little choice in the fare, and it is not easy to follow the Bible rule and "eat what is set before you, asking no questions for conscience sake." The atmosphere seems full of gossip and petty quarrels, and one seldom meets such charming people as the autocrat of the breakfast-table found, perhaps because one is neither a wit nor a philosopher one's self. When there are children it is very difficult to get accommodation for them at a moderate sum. There is a third alternative, which Mr. Howells has described so vividly in his story of "*A Modern Instance*"—to take a room in a house and go elsewhere for meals, but this involves an amount of exposure to the weather and general discomfort to which no one would willingly submit who could do better.

In England lodgings are the universal rule and boarding-houses the exception, almost unknown except in London and a few of the large towns, where they are patronized chiefly by Americans and foreigners. The price of lodgings varies greatly according to the locality and the season of the year, and one can be had to suit any purse. Once established in them one is absolutely independent, as if in one's own house; far more so indeed, for there are no servants weighing on one's mind, and if the cook gave warning the next morning it would make no difference in the punctual appearance of dinner. In point of fact, the mistress generally attends to the cooking herself, if she does not actually do it. She comes in the morning for orders, and will if requested do the marketing, sending up at the end of the week a fascinatingly neat little bill with every item set down with scrupulous exactness. Most idle people find it an amusement to buy their own provisions. It seems rather a joke to order a couple of pounds of meat and half a pound of green beans, but this is quite enough for two persons, and to those accustomed to the bountiful supply necessary for a large family there is something ludicrous in the appearance of four potatoes calmly reposing in a large vegetable dish and presuming to be amply sufficient for a meal. Providing everything one's self it is possible to have exactly what one likes and live as extravagantly or economically as one pleases. Pastry is not usually a landlady's strong point, but she generally makes nice little puddings, and stewed fruit can well take its place, with great advantage from the hygienic point of view. Cake, as we at home understand the word, is an idea that has not yet penetrated the brain of an English cook, and good ice cream is expensive, costing in London about \$2.40 a quart.

In the dining-room, or parlor, if there is but one sitting-room, there is always a side-board, where the sugar, jam, coffee, biscuit, cheese, cake, if any be forthcoming, and such things are kept. The bread and butter and cold meat are put in the landlady's safe down stairs, and in our experience invariably return to us undiminished in size, which speaks well for the honesty of those who have them in charge.

A funny little tea caddy is always provided to hold the tea. One is not tied to any special time for meals,

but can order breakfast, dinner or tea at any hour that is most convenient, a great comfort when one is sightseeing or has many engagements. Better still if a judicious supply of little luxuries and delicacies be kept in the cupboard one can ask a friend to dine without extra expense or fear of black looks from anyone.

A servant takes the entire charge of the rooms, sweeps, dusts and makes the beds, turning them down in the evening and having everything in readiness for the night. She sets the table and waits, opens the door for visitors, and if she is rung for comes to show them out again. The rooms are generally clean and tidy and the beds exceedingly comfortable. There are little ornaments about the parlor, which, if not strictly esthetic, yet do away with the dreary, forlorn barrenness of an apartment where there is nothing but absolutely necessary furniture.

Why cannot some enterprising woman at home, who has a furnished house and is obliged to earn her own living, let it out in lodgings? She would not have a tenth of the care and anxiety that is involved in keeping boarders, and she would only have to cook the provisions instead of providing them, while the people who were happy enough to be with her would enjoy the comforts of home instead of living in a caravansarie.

ELIZABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"WHAT are air-biscuits, and can you give a rule for them?"

G. C. M., Omaha, Neb.

They are simply the Southern "wafer," made as follows: One pint of flour, one tablespoonful of best butter, half a teaspoonful of salt. Wet with sweet milk, enough to make a soft dough. Take a piece about the size of a nutmeg and roll it out to the size of a teacup saucer, thin as possible. Bake on a large sheet of tin or iron, and watch lest they burn. Very nice for invalids especially.

A recent inquiry in your columns as to staining floors, leads me to give my experience, since the published directions that I have seen are too complicated for most amateurs, and there seems to be a general tendency to grumble at the cost and quality of professional work in this line. To stain a floor so that it will be fairly like black walnut in color, the following ingredients are required:

Thick Asphaltum,	\$1.25 per gallon.
Best Turpentine,	.60 "
Best Brown Shellac Varnish,	3.50 "

The prices given are present retail rates. The asphaltum in its undiluted state is nearly black and so thick that it will hardly run. Two parts asphaltum and one part turpentine is nearly right for a black walnut stain, but more or less asphaltum may be used, according as a darker or lighter brown is desired. With a broad paint-brush go over the floor with this mixture. The result will be a somewhat dingy brown, which will dry in ten or twelve hours, more or less, according to temperature. When passably dry, go over the whole with the shellac varnish. This will dry in half an hour or less, and bring out a comparatively rich shade of brown. The stain may be greatly improved by the addition of burnt sienna (twenty cents per pound) stirred in with the asphaltum and turpentine in the proportion of about two pounds to a gallon of the mixture. The quantity may be varied according to the degree of redness desired. The beauty of this stain is that its preparation is as easy as mixing molasses and water, and exactness in the proportions of the ingredients is not essential. I should advise, however, preliminary experiments, measuring the proportions with a teaspoon before mixing in a large quantity. Roughly speaking, a quart of the stain when ready for use will cover some ten square yards of surface, and a quart of shellac will varnish it. The cost, therefore, of staining the floor of a room fifteen feet square in this way should not exceed \$2, if we count the materials alone, which may, of course, be purchased by the quart or pint if desired. C. N.

HELEN CAMPBELL.



CHRISTMAS is the ruling motive of the stories and poems which THE CONTINENT this week lays before its readers. Harriet Beecher Stowe, Joel Chandler Harris ("Uncle Remus"), E. P. Roe, R. W. Raymond, Nathan Kouns, Margaret J. Preston, Mary Bradley, Maria Oakey Dewing and others are among the contributors whose names are known all over the English-reading world. Nor must we forget the artists and engravers whose skillful fingers add so much to the reader's enjoyment. F. S. Church, A. B. Frost, Mary K. Trotter, T. W. Dewing, G. P. Williams, Edith Cooper and E. Clement are among them; but where shall we stop if we begin to give credit to every one who has faithfully performed his or her part in preparing this Christmas number? The compositors, who have "set up" and corrected the printed matter; the proof-readers, who read it over and over again; the electrotypers, the pressmen, the binders, the folders, the mailing clerks, the messengers, and an army of workers whom there is neither time nor space to enumerate, have each had a share in sending all over the continent to supply the popular demand. Are there any who do not work harder at this time of the year to make holiday for the rest of the world? If so, they will please accept the commiseration and good wishes of those who are really responsible for the possibility of A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

THE present number closes the second volume of the CONTINENT, the third volume beginning with the first week of the new year. By the favor of its readers, the weekly magazine has passed from the category of experiments into that of assured successes, and has become a fixed fact. The project was a novel one, but its generous and flattering reception has abundantly justified the belief that a weekly magazine was wanted which should present the most attractive features of the great monthlies, and that its establishment would mark an advance in periodical literature. The volume now closing will have satisfied our readers of the purpose of the Editor to give them the best that can be had in all departments of literature and art. Our arrangements for the coming year are still more complete, and will enable us to lay before them attractions that neither money nor assiduity could have procured at the outset, but which have developed with the growth of the enterprise. The list of contributors will include the best of those whose work has adorned our pages in the past, with many others who have not hitherto been represented. Constantly increasing facilities and more extended relations have opened a still wider field for enterprise and selection, and we feel sure that we make a notable promise in assuring our readers that the CONTINENT during the coming year will be better than ever.

It only remains for us to say to our readers that we rely upon them, not only for their support, but for their active interest with their friends. The Editor considers himself a trustee for his readers. To the extent that they enable him to enhance the value of the magazine for them, he will enlarge and increase its attractions, transforming the means they put into his hands into good literature and illustration for their enjoyment.

"Tickly Bender."

THE boys at school have no more exciting sport than that called, in juvenile parlance, "Tickly Bender." It is played on the thin ice of autumn, or the floating cakes of spring, and consists in a rivalry between daring spirits as to which will go farthest from the shore. Shouting their slogan of defiance, "Tickly Bender!" they pursue their perilous course until, as it generally happens, one of them falls in, and the spectators whom curiosity has assembled upon the bank are put to great discomfort and danger in rescuing him from death.

This same game is played also by boys of a larger growth. Under the name of Arctic exploration, they traverse the icy road toward the North Pole. They also usually fall in, and are the object of search parties and relief expeditions without number. The boy who played "Tickly Bender" upon the mill-pond was whipped and sent to bed; the man who returns from a similar adventure in the polar ice-fields is hailed as a hero.

True heroism is bravery expended in a good cause. The world is full of heroes and heroines, in home and hospital, in storm and penury, in fire and flood, on sea and land, in the cab of the locomotive and the pilot-house of the steamboat, but they go almost unnoticed. About the time that news was first received from the *Jeannette*, an English merchant-vessel was disabled in crossing the Atlantic. Her captain hailed a sister ship and asked to be towed into port. This request could not be granted; the exigencies of the service would permit no greater assistance than to take the unfortunate crew on board and land them in safety. But, from captain down to cook, they refused to give up the ship, in which their employer's interests were at stake, until all hope was gone. When next heard from the vessel had sunk, and its sailors, tossing in small boats upon the wintry sea, were nearly all dead from privation and cold. They were heroes, who died from a sense of duty, and yet for every line of notice they received the crew of the *Jeannette* had a page of newspaper praise. The athlete who jumps from Brooklyn bridge may not be altogether useless, for his action shows the sailor that it is possible, with self-possession and by properly pulling himself together, to fall from the highest mast-head into the sea with impunity. The doctor who fasts for forty days is in some sense a hero, for the remembrance of his endurance may encourage a castaway crew to hold on to life when they would otherwise die. The mariner who crosses the ocean in a cock-boat is not brave without reason, for he shows the shipwrecked party that the smallest craft can make the longest voyage. The polar navigator of the present day is of little use except to gratify an unhealthful curiosity.

Commercial men have long ago given up their interest in those frozen regions. The explorer may lay the flatteringunction of science to his soul, but the world at large is not so unscientific as to believe that the results of these voyages are commensurate with their cost. There is such a thing as paying too dear for your whistle, even in the walks of knowledge. It is no great boon to humanity to know that certain hyperborean islands, otherwise uninhabitable, are frequented by certain species of birds: that

the ice in certain latitudes has a tendency, at a certain time, to float in this or that direction; and that the seal and the polar bear upon their native bergs follow a different diet from that of their brethren in Central Park. An intelligent college professor could take a turn around his kitchen garden and gather an equal amount of useful information. Recent speech-makers, laboring for something polite to say, have eulogized the spirit of bravery and devotion which is embodied in the adventures of these men; but their devotion is not equal to that of the victims of Juggernaut, nor is their bravery greater than that of the suicide who quietly drops into the river, giving trouble to no one but the coroner, and a legitimate fee even to him. The least that can be decently done by the future Arctic explorer is to prohibit beforehand all search parties, with their waste of real heroism, in his behalf. If suicide is wrong, then a journey to the North Pole, from which the chances of return are infinitesimal, is no virtue. The ethics of self-destruction remain the same, whatever be the means employed, and in the grand round-up many glorious heroes of history will be ranked with the wretch whose body is staked down in shame at the cross-roads.

There is an old and trite question which, however, will bear repeating: "What will they do with the North Pole when they find it?" What instructions, what scientific programme, do they carry with them? What deep problem of Nature will the journey solve? If it is simply a question of ice or open sea, the game is not worth the candle. If it is only to satisfy the vainglory of the searchers and enable them to say that they have been there, such vanity should not be encouraged. What is the use of discovering an imaginary point which has no striking peculiarity except that the north star is nearly in its zenith? Why not hunt some other astronomical locality more easily accessible, such, for instance, as the intersection of the fiftieth parallel with the one hundredth meridian? Or why not set up a row of stakes along the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, or survey the grand old Equator, or locate that meridian in the Pacific where the day is skipped, all of which lines are of greater importance in human affairs than the North Pole? The brave men who are opening commercial roads in Africa are doing the world's work. If the time and labor and expense which have been given, with no reasonable excuse, to the cause of Arctic exploration in the last half-century had been turned in search of a route for the Isthmus canal, we should not now have two rival companies in the field, each claiming superior advantages. Unfortunately, our would-be heroes find it more grandly heroic to freeze or starve to death in the North than to die of the fever and dysentery in the South.

Before the present Congress there will probably come some more young men with schemes for approaching the North Pole by boat, balloon and sledge. They will be the heroes of female society and the bores of the lobby. They will ask for a national appropriation. Some of these, knowing that their request will be refused, take this as the cheapest way to gain notoriety. Others, filled with the explorer's zeal, are really anxious to go North and freeze their ears again. With all of our life-saving stations by the sea and signal stations on the mountain-tops, it would seem that this excess of animal spirits could be profitably used within our own borders; but if the posts of duty fail to accomplish the desired result, our would-be Arctic explorer can easily and effectually cool his ardor by joining his younger brother in the thrilling sport of "Ticky Bender."

FRANK D. Y. CARPENTER.

THERE seems to be a strong probability, if we may judge from contemporary literature, that those of us who hold to the "orthodox" creed—whatever that may be—will have to rebel against the leadership of such men as the Rev. Drs. Woolsey, Schaff, McCosh, Magoun and others of like good and regular standing, and appoint in

their places some carefully selected graduates or even undergraduates of the sterner theological schools. Time was when venerable biblical scholars like those named would sooner have cut off their right hands than have permitted them to write: "On this point I am not prepared to express a positive opinion;" "Commentators differ in regard to the meaning of this passage;" "There are certain problems in connection with this dogma, as laid down by the fathers, which, in our present state of knowledge, are exceedingly difficult of satisfactory solution." Fifty years ago a clergyman or a college president who made such admissions as these in his pulpit, or went into print with them—whatever he might have done in the privacy of inter-professional intercourse—would have found himself in very hot water. The "thoughts of men" may be "widened with the process of the suns," but it looks very much as though their creeds were being proportionately shortened. For those who are disposed to shake their heads over the agnostic tendencies—for what is agnosticism but not knowing?—of these wise elders, only one course is open. The seminaries contain and will in due course graduate, scores of young men who know all about everything, and it is a comforting reflection that, as fast as these grow up and begin to find that they do *not* know, younger ones who do will perennially come forward to take their places.

THE novel of the day is an ever-fresh source of surprise; the novelist of the day still more so, and the small proportion of civilized mankind who have not yet written or expressed the intention of writing a novel is undergoing a scrutiny never before equaled or imagined. Mr. James has looked at us through the large end of his opera-glass, till convinced we are small enough for the microscopical examination he has inaugurated, and though at moments surprised to find his subject rather beyond the limits of the focus, tells what he sees in such charming language that one becomes reconciled, nay, almost joyful, at being favored with a place on the slide. Mr. Howells turns anatomist,¹ but chooses hopelessly common and uninteresting subjects, more for the sake of demonstrating his own power of delineating to the minutest nerve-fibre, every shade of vulgarity and meanness and narrowness, than for any personal enjoyment in the work. In fact, one imagines him approaching his dissecting-table with a look of the deep disgust he so evidently experiences at the repulsive nature of his subject, and, though there is a sprinkling of aromatic vinegar here and there, for the comforting of his own and the reader's susceptibilities, he shrinks and cringes at every turn of the knife, till, warmed to his work by the discovery of some new malformation, which he holds up to general view as a sample of the average structure.

That Mr. Howells, like Mr. James, is a master in the fiction of to-day, must be admitted at once, but, as with certain masters in the modern French school of painting, who know every secret of color and have infinite patience in detail and finish, soul has been left out. Indeed, that a soul exists and can find place in these exquisite bodies is denied altogether, and thus such life as we see is but a galvanized one, and ceases when the master's hand leaves the controlling spring.

In "The Undiscovered Country," the extremely limited nature of Mr. Howells' spiritual perception was more clearly evident than ever before. As a traveler he had known what to see and how to make others see, and given a new charm to every familiar story by the grace of a style which is hardly equaled among living writers. In these records of life abroad, as in the earlier novels, there were not only grace and picturesqueness, but a delicious humor, quiet, but subtle and penetrating, covering a delicate sar-

(1) A MODERN INSTANCE: A Novel. By William D. Howells. 12mo, (pp. 514, \$1.50). James R. Osgood & Co.

casm, a gentle cynicism, which is his real attitude toward mankind. As a rule, one is inclined to say that he more often despises than loves the people of whom he writes. Often an active dislike is perceptible, and always a sense of superiority, rising at times even to insolence.

Admitting at once that we are a people of absurdities and incongruities, that we are, as another critic has defined us, "the most educated and the least cultivated people" among civilized nations, and that no sarcasm can be too strong against our exasperating and insufferable idiosyncrasies and generally iniquitous methods of speech and thought, the fact remains that we are very willing to be taught and very submissive to our teachers, whatsoever methods they may use. And one who looks upon our villages, and the people whose lives are bounded by their limits, with any genuine insight, finds everywhere the same striving for something better, and always the life of all humanity with its unceasing struggle and its unceasing progress.

It was this deep and almost yearning sympathy with this common life and common struggle that was the deepest source of George Eliot's power. Her work, though hedged in by a personal creed, which often shut out the light of heaven, is still alive with aspiration. Spiritual forces conquer. If in one life they seem to fail, the battle renews itself in another, and victory, if not present, is on the way. But with Mr. Howells it is simply to render with microscopic fidelity each low and miserable phase of thought and life. That he attacks in the present case a monster evil, and has in many points shown a power and vigor for which his readers were not prepared by anything that had preceded it, does not make the result one whit more a just or even decent portrait of real American life. It is a phase shared by an increasingly less and less number, yet it goes abroad and is accepted as the very heart of American beliefs—photograph of our tendencies, our methods and their results. In the final scene in the courtroom there is immense vigor and dramatic effect; and no more scathing words on certain infamous divorce laws have ever been spoken. There is a fierce indignation, which is the final touch in a series of scenes, each one, if more and more dramatic, also more and more painful and repulsive; but the book is a depressing one. It is the atmosphere, at last, of one of Swedenborg's hells, and no angel opens the door.

THE BOOK-SHELF.

"F. ANSTEY," the author of "Vice Versa," the most successful English novel of the season, is really named Guthrie, and still in his twenties.

RICHARD WAGNER is deep in work on "The Arts and Civilization," and is in the midst of both, his home at present being in a magnificent old Venetian palace.

THE demand for Mr. Longfellow's writings has so increased since his death, that the Riverside Press has been kept constantly busy. The latest edition is in two large volumes, bound in leather and profusely illustrated.

"LAW AND LAWYERS IN LITERATURE," is the title of a new volume by Mr. Irving Brown, editor of the *Albany Law Review*. Mr. Brown is a book collector as well as editor, and his venture promises to be very readable.

THE *Art Interchange* is not only of practical service in all matters of decoration, whether with brush or needle, but is coming to be an authority in literary matters, which it treats entertainingly, yet with excellent judgment.

"CHRISTINE," by T. Buchanan Read, a short narrative poem, very charming and very improbable, has been illustrated from designs by Frederick Dielman, and forms one of the smaller gift-books of the season, the book being made up with great care and elegance in all minor details. (Pp. 47, \$1.50, Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott & Co.).

On the same size and order is "Ring Out Wild Bells," by Alfred Tennyson, with fifteen illustrations, designed by Miss Humphrey and engraved by Andrew. The drawing in one or two of the figures is incorrect, but the book as a whole well deserves a place in this popular series. (\$1.50, Lee & Shepard, Boston).

"LITTLE FOLKS" (pp. 380, \$1.25, Cassel, Petter, Gaipin & Co.) has the illuminated cover so popular at present, and, while distinctively English, is a very charming gift for young children. "Boots at the Holly Tree Inn" (\$1.50), from the same firm, has been illustrated by J. C. Beard, and, though the coloring is exceedingly crude, is still an amusing revival of a very characteristic piece of Dickens' work.

THE readers of "Anne" will take pleasure in knowing that Miss Constance Woolson's new novel, "For the Major," now appearing in Harper's Magazine, is a marked advance on the work of the former story. Happily she has no "manner," the worst possession an author can acquire, and her character-studies unite both vigor and delicacy. If the present interest is sustained to the end we shall have the most notable work yet done in American fiction.

THE latest arrival in periodicals is *Latine*, a small monthly in Latin, designed to facilitate the study of that language. It is the result of a determination to make Latin an interesting and popular study, and the editor, Professor E. S. Shumway, of the State Normal School at Potsdam, N. Y., has already had most exceptional success with pupils, the conversational method forming the major part of his system.

MR. HOWELLS' article on Henry James has stirred up English as well as American critics, and the London *World* especially treats him in a singularly light-minded manner, characterizing his style as of the "tepid, invertebrate, captain's-biscuit" sort, going on to quote Mr. Howells' unfortunate sentence about Thackeray and Dickens, and ending: "Let us burn our *éditions de luxe*, and fill our shelves with dime copies of "Daisy Miller" or "Their Wedding Journey."

"YOUNG AMERICANS IN JAPAN" proved so popular a book for young people last year that they will look with interest on another from the same author. "The Wonderful City of Tokio," by Edward Greer, is the further adventures of the Jewett family and their old friend, Oto Nambo, and the one hundred and sixty-nine illustrations are in themselves a mine of entertainment. (Pp. 301, \$1.75, Lee & Shepard, Boston). "OUR LITTLE ONES," from the same firm (pp. 383, \$1.75), makes an equally, perhaps even more fascinating volume for younger children, and the illustrations, three hundred and eighty-nine in number, have the added advantage of having been designed expressly for the magazine.

THE papers under the head of "How to Succeed," written for *The Christian Union* in 1892, have been gathered into a little volume, the subjects covered being success in public life—as a minister, a physician, an artist, a farmer, etc. Men distinguished in each calling have given their experience, Dr. Williard Parker, Rev. Dr. John Hall, Leopold Damrosch and other equally notable names, writing the story of how they came to the places they now occupy. The book is full of wise suggestion, though it may be summed up in strong character and bent in the beginning, and steady, patient work till success came and after. (Pp. 131, 50 cts., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York).

A LITTLE thread of story blends with the details of travel and history which make up Mrs. Lizzie W. Chapman's last book for young people, "Three Vassar Girls Abroad," the illustrations being principally by the author's husband, known as "Champ." A young critic has already pronounced upon it, and writes seriously, after a remark or two on the plan of the book: "The descrip-

tions are plain, and give one a very good idea of the different places visited and of the fashions of the people inhabiting them. There is just enough liveliness in it to keep it from being tiresome, and altogether I can recommend it as an interesting and improving book for young girls to read." (Pp. 287, boards, \$1.50; cloth, \$2.00, Estes & Lauriat, Boston).

It is difficult to discover the secret of the popularity of the "Elsie Books," which follow in rapid succession, and are even more monotonous than Miss Warner's. The heroine is characterless, her chief grace being always "a sweet submissiveness," while all live in a luxury impossible for the region of country in which the scene is chiefly laid. Miss Warner is tiresome, but her feeling for nature and delicate descriptive power are always an alleviation not to be found in the present volumes, which, while unobjectionable in moral tone—in fact, effusively goody-goody—are certainly not literature. But both "Mildred's Married Life" and "Grandmother Elsie," by Martha Finley, are harmless, and this to-day must count as a merit. (16mo, \$1.25 each, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York).

FOUR books for boys, of varying degrees of merit, but all unobjectionable in tone and purpose, come from Lee & Shepard, Boston. Of these Mr. Trowbridge's takes the lead, "The Jolly Rover" (pp. 292, \$1.25), being really a strong blast against the tendencies of dime novels. The Rev. Elijah Kellogg ranks almost equally high, and in "The Live Oak Boys" (pp. 356, \$1.00) gives the adventures of Richard Constable, afloat and ashore, the boy being one of those cases dreaded by the village people, but growing to a fine and honorable manhood. Oliver Optic appears again in "All Adrift, or The Goldwing Club" (pp. 340, \$1.25), and is very like its numberless predecessors; and "The Young Trail Hunters" series, by Samuel W. Cozzens, is completed by "The Young Silver Seekers" (pp. 343, \$1.25).

NEW BOOKS.

NIAGARA AND OTHER FAMOUS CATARACTS OF THE WORLD. By Geo. W. Holley. Illustrated. 1 vol., 4to, cloth, gilt, \$2.00. A. C. Armstrong & Son, New York.

THE GOOD OLD STORY OF CINDERELLA. By Lieut. Col. Secumbe. Illustrated profusely. Pp. 296, \$2.50. A. C. Armstrong & Son, New York.

STORIES FROM THE GREEK TRAGEDIANS. By the Rev. Alfred J. Church. Twenty illustrations, pp. 257, \$1.50. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

GRANDMOTHER ELSIE. A sequel to Elsie's Widowedhood. By Martha Finley. Pp. 298, \$1.25. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

ZIG ZAG JOURNEYS IN THE OCCIDENT. The Atlantic to the Pacific. By Hezekiah Butterworth. Pp. 320, boards, \$1.75; cloth, \$2.25. Estes & Lauriat, Boston.

CHRISTINE. By T. Buchanan Read. Illustrated. \$1.50. J. B. Lipincott & Co.

A LIBRARY OF RELIGIOUS POETRY. A collection of the best poems of all ages and tongues. Edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., and Arthur Gilman, M.A. 8vo, pp. 1004, \$6.00. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

BOOTS AT THE HOLLY TREE INN. By Charles Dickens. Illustrated. \$1.50. Cassel, Petter, Galpin & Co., New York.

AUBERT DUBAYET; OR, THE TWO SISTER REPUBLICS. By Charles Gayarré. Pp. 470, \$1.50. With portrait of Dubayet. J. R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

BRACEBRIDGE HALL. By Washington Irving. Illustrated. 25 cents. Macmillan & Co., New York.

THE LONGFELLOW CALENDAR. 1883. \$1.00. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston.

POEMS OF AMERICAN PATRIOTISM. Chosen by J. Brander Matthews. Pp. 269, \$1.50. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

THE NATURE AND FORM OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT FOUNDED IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. By the Honorable George Shea. Pp. 82, 75 cts. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston.

MEMOIR OF JOHN A. DAHLGREN, REAR-ADmirAL UNITED STATES NAVY. By his Widow, Madeleine Vinton Dahlgren. With portraits and illustrations. 8vo, pp. 660, \$3.00. James R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

SCIENTIFIC.

THE National Academy of Sciences has recently issued a report upon the "Scientific and Economical Relations of the Sorghum Sugar Industry." It is very elaborate and is signed by Professors Johnson, Silliman and many others. The committee find as a result of their investigation that all the analyses made in the Department of Agriculture not only confirm the well-known fact of the presence of sugar in the juices of sorghum and maize in notable quantity, but they also establish the fact that the sorghum yields in its juice, when taken at the proper stage of its development, about as much cane-sugar as the best sugar-cane of tropical regions. An examination of the analytical tables submitted to them shows that the juices of sorghum in certain exceptional, but not isolated cases, were remarkable for the amount of cane-sugar they contained. It appears that three varieties of sorghum gave over thirteen per cent of sugar; seven varieties, twelve per cent; seven, eleven per cent; seven, ten per cent, and seven, nine per cent of sugar; and that of the varieties of maize grown in 1880, ten varieties gave over nine per cent cane-sugar; ten varieties ten per cent; nine varieties eleven per cent; nine varieties twelve per cent; four varieties thirteen per cent; one variety fourteen per cent, and one fifteen per cent. The committee state that in 1880 over 62,000,000 acres of land, or thirty-eight per cent of all the cultivated land of the United States, were in maize. The amount of the sugar thus apparently lost, calculated by the results obtained by the Department of Agriculture in the last three years, is equal to the present product of the entire world. A remarkable uniformity has been discovered in the several varieties of sorghum as sugar-producing plants when fully developed, but it has also been learned that the different varieties vary widely in the time required for their full development, varying, as has been shown, fully three months between the earlier and later maturing varieties. The committee find that after the cutting of the cane it should be immediately worked up for the production of sugar. The results submitted to the committee also indicate that the exclusion from the matured cane of all immature cane is of the greatest importance if the manufacture of sugar is contemplated, and show the importance of an even crop with no suckers in its manufacture for sugar. High-grade marketable sugar has been successfully made from sorghum-juice, comparing favorably with sugar from the true sugar-cane or sugar-beet. With regard to the so-called gum, a product of the manufacture, the committee say that in the purging of sorghum and corn-stalk sugar it happens very often that this operation is of unusual difficulty, owing to the presence of a certain gummy substance, and this practical difficulty has been by some so magnified that the economical production of sugar from these two plants has been confidently declared to be impossible. In the experience of those in Washington, as well as that of many other observers, this peculiar substance has been found to be present in quantity so small as to offer little if any resistance to complete purging in the ordinary centrifugal. It appears to be formed by transformation of other constituents of the juice in the process of syrup production.

DURING the present season, as in 1881, the headquarters of the United States Fish Commission have been at Wood's Hole, Mass. The special object this year was to continue the exploration of the sea-bottom and its fauna beneath the edge of the Gulf Stream, which had been so successfully carried on during the two previous seasons. One of the most peculiar facts connected with the dredging this season was the scarcity or total absence of many of the species, especially of crustaceans, that were taken in the two previous seasons, in essentially the same localities and depths, in vast numbers—several thousands at a time. An

attempt to catch the "tile-fish" by means of a long trawl-line, on the same ground where eighty were caught on one occasion last year, resulted in total failure this year. It is probable, therefore, that the finding of vast numbers of dead "tile-fishes" floating at the surface in this region last winter, as was reported by many vessels, was connected with a wholesale destruction of the life at the bottom along the shallower part of this belt (in seventy to one hundred and fifty fathoms), where the southern forms of life and higher temperature (48° to 50°) are found. This great destruction of life was probably caused by a very severe storm that occurred in this region at that time, which, by agitating the bottom-water, forced outward the very cold water that, even in summer, occupies the great area of shallower sea in less than sixty fathoms along the coast, and thus caused a sudden lowering of the temperature along this narrow warm zone, where the "tile-fish" and the crustaceas referred to were formerly found.

How large industries are often based on the production of small articles is well illustrated in the manufacture of watch glasses. The number in use is enormous, and a still larger number are broken every year. Near the little village of Sarrebourg, in Lorraine, is the largest manufacturing of watch glasses in the world—that of the Trois-Fontaines. Commenced in 1848, by a wise division of labor and the use of the most highly improved machinery, this establishment has achieved a commercial success almost beyond parallel. To manufacture a watch glass requires thirty-five distinct operations. Yet five hundred and twenty gross have been turned out of this manufactory in a single day. This is equal to about twenty-five million per annum. More than five hundred employés are required to do this work. It is estimated that two and a-half millions of watches are now made each year. During the last fifty years more than seventy millions have been sold. Probably not less than eighty-six or eighty-seven million watches are now in use, and every one must have a glass. But watch glasses are fragile things, and nearly fifty million are consumed annually.

REFERENCE CALENDAR.

[THIS COLUMN IS INTENDED AS A RECORD FOR REFERENCE, NOT AS A SUMMARY OF CURRENT NEWS.]

November 25.—A government detective, Cox by name, was shot in Dublin, Ireland, and an attempt was made to rescue the assassin from the police, who promptly effected his arrest. He is an alleged Fenian.—The President removed from office Charles E. Henry, Marshal of the District of Columbia; D. B. Ainger, Postmaster at Washington; M. M. Baker, his assistant; M. D. Helm, superintendent of the *Congressional Record*, and George E. Spencer, Government Director Union Pacific Railroad, for improper conduct in relation to the Star Route trials.—Dr. C. C. Cox, late Commissioner of Pensions and President of the District Board of Health, died in Washington.—The Printers' Paper Mill, near Lancaster, Pa., was burned; loss, \$100,000.—Bennett, Duffy & Co.'s stove factory was burned at Quincy, Ill.; loss, \$130,000. . . . **Nov. 26.**—At Greenpoint, N. Y., the works of the Standard Oil Company were burned and two lives lost, the men jumping into the river to escape the fire.—First considerable snow of the season along the North Atlantic coast.—Commodore Henry Eagle, U. S. N., one of the oldest officers in the service, died in New York, aged eighty-two years.—Samuel Lake, a "pioneer" of Buffalo, N. Y., died from injuries, accidentally received, at the age of ninety-three years. . . . **Nov. 27.**—The President made appointments as follows to fill the vacancies made by dismissal, as above stated: Thos. L. Tulloch to be Postmaster at Washington; Avon Pearson to be superintendent of the *Congressional Record*, and James B. Colgate to be Government Director of the Union Pacific Railroad. . . . **Nov. 28.**—John T. Morgan was re-elected to the United States Senate by the Legislature of Alabama.—The first of three iron steamships to run between Newport News and Brazil was launched at Roach's yard, Chester.—The Canadian Pacific Rail-

way raised its capital stock from \$15,000,000 to \$100,000,000.—General A. S. Herron, of Louisiana, died at Baton Rouge.—Rear-Admiral James H. Strong, U. S. N., died at Columbia, S. C.

. . . . **Nov. 29.**—James S. Pike, ex-United States Minister to the Hague and formerly associate editor of the New York *Tribune*, died suddenly at Calais, Me.—Rev. Dr. Manning, pastor of "The Old South," Boston, died in Portland, Me.—Colonel Edward D. Blake, a graduate of West Point and a soldier of the Confederacy, died in Charleston, S. C. . . . **Nov. 30.**—"Thanksgiving Day."—Sleighbelling in most regions north of the latitude of Philadelphia. . . . **Dec. 1.**—Henry Cruse Murphy, of Brooklyn, N. Y., died, aged seventy-two years.—Samuel Remington, President of the Remington Arms Company, died in New York.

THE DRAMA.

THE advance sale on the first day for Mrs. Langtry's first week at Haverly's Theatre, Philadelphia, was some \$6000.

MR. CHARLES WYNNDHAM, the English actor and manager, soon to appear in the principal cities of this country, is reputed to be very wealthy. He is a great favorite in London.

MESRS. HARRIGAN AND HART met with a flattering success upon their return to the style of local farce of New York low life, with which their names have been identified. "McSorley's Inflation" is their latest effort's suggestive title.

SERGEANT BALLANTINE, the eminent English barrister, lecturer and wit, and one of the best known men in London, will deliver a series of lectures under Mr. D'Oyly Carte's management, in the principal cities this winter.

"YOUNG MRS. WINTHROP," which has been attended by large audiences at each performance, will be withdrawn from the Madison Square Theatre in February, and will be succeeded by a new and as yet unnamed play by Mr. Frederick Marsden.

"ALMOST A LIFE," a play by Mrs. Henderson, whose husband is the manager of the Standard Theatre, New York, has been produced in England, with Mr. Eben Plympton and Miss Marie Gordon in the principal characters. The play was well received in New York some four years ago.

SOMETHING like \$100,000 has already been subscribed for the Dramatic Festival in Cincinnati. In addition to the names mentioned last week those of Mr. Thomas Keene and Mr. Frederick Warde are now added. "Romeo and Juliet," "Julius Caesar," "The Hunchback," "King John" and "Othello," will be the plays produced.

VICTOR HUGO's play of "Le Roi s'Amuse," received its second representation lately in Paris, the first having occurred fifty years before. The leading people of the French capital were present and accorded the distinguished author (who occupied a box) and his work a brilliant reception. "The Fool's Revenge" is the English adaptation of this play—"Bertuccio" being one of Mr. Booth's greatest characters.

"THE RANTZAU" opened the twelfth regular season at the Union Square Theatre, New York. The play was very successful in Paris, and bids fair to be equally so in New York. It was free from sensationalism of every kind, the interest depending upon the naturalness of its characterizations and simplicity of story—the hatred of two brothers affording its *raison d'être*. It was splendidly acted throughout, marked hits being made by Miss Maude Harrison and Messrs. Stoddart and Ramsey.

"IOLANTHE, OR THE PEER AND THE PERI," Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's latest collaboration, was received with great favor at its initial performance at the Savoy Theatre, London. It was produced on the same night at the Standard Theatre, New York, and, although successful, public anticipation was scarcely realized. The libretto is very witty and thoroughly Gilbertian, but portions of the music evince signs of strain and effort, and lack the melodious swing which is so patent in Mr. Sullivan's former work. Tuneful bits abound, however, while the entire lyric work is, perhaps, on a higher plane than that of its famous predecessors. The deservedly great reputations of the authors guarantee enormous money returns for "Iolanthe" wherever produced, but it is a doubtful question whether it will create such a popular craze as followed the production of "Pinafore" and "Patience." The superstitious may have the opportunity of explaining that the absence of the letter "P" did it all, unless indeed the presence of that potent letter in the sub-title counteracts the effect of its unwarrantable omission as a leader.



'Twas the Night after Christmas—Tommy's Dream.

A "Spiritual."

As Sung by Uncle Remus.

DEM LAM'S A-CRYIN'.

AIN'T you year dem Lam's a-cryin'?
Cryin', cryin', cry no mo'!
Lam's a-shoutin', Lam's a-cryin',
Cryin', cryin', on de udder sho'!

One fer Paul en one for Silas,
En one fer ter make my heart rejoice!
Don't you year dem Lam's a-cryin'?
O dat Saviour blessid voice!

Don't you year dem Lam's a-cryin'?
Satan crawl en Satan creep;
Lam's a-shoutin', Lam's a cryin',
O Good Shepherd, feed my sheep!

He kin stop dem Lam's fum cryin',
He kin make dis heart rejoice;
No mo' callin', no mo' cryin',
W'en my dear soul shill git hit's choice!

Jesus watch w'iles you been weepin';
Weepin', weepin', weep, soul, weep!
All his talkin' soun' like singin'
O Good Shepherd, feed my sheep!

One fer Paul en one for Silas,
En one fer ter make my heart rejoice!
Don't you year dem Lam's a-cryin'?
O dat Saviour blessid voice!

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.

Fairies.

I HAD rather be Cinderella,
And live upon water and crust,
Than either of her proud sisters
Who doomed her to dwell in the dust.

She sat so sweet and so humble,
While they in their satins swept by,
And sung to herself, when they left her,
Despite the stray tear in her eye.

It is only the old, old story,
Such as good grandmothers tell
At night by fireside and bedside.
And children love it well.

But it has such a sweet, deep meaning
That, though I am a child no more,
My heart holds ever the echo
Of the story loved of yore.

Yet to all there cometh some fairy;
She may not bring coaches and gowns,
But she scatters an inner sunshine
That is better than kingly crowns.

She sends them to labor smiling,
Helps them to sing when alone,
To rejoice in birds and blossoms,
And to bless their own hearthstone.

Have you ever seen such fairies?
Do you know the way they went?
For they love to work sweet wonders
And to banish discontent.

FRANCES E. GRENO.

"Pe Wit! Pe Wee!"

FAR back in boyhood's rosy morn,
Upon the farm where I was born,
When Winter's hand relaxed its hold,
And Spring's soft arms did earth enfold,
How glad was I the bird to see
That seemed to say,

"Pe wit! Pe wee!"

That well-remembered barn within
How oft have I enchanted been;
As, perched upon some brace or beam,
The songster still its threadbare theme
Did dwell upon! However trite,
No odds—I listened with delight.

"Pe wit! Pe wee!"

Nor was it an esthetic strain
That did my spirit so enchain;
For who could guess a charm could be
In those shrill notes,

"Pe wit! Pe wee!"

Now far removed from that dear spot,
Those boyhood scenes still unforget;
That fragile songster still I hear,
His strain unchanged from year to year;
And yet 'tis ever new to me—
That stereotyped

"Pe wit! Pe wee!"

E. R. LATTA.





CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

VOL. 2 NO. 25 DECEMBER 27 1882

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CONDUCTED BY ALBION W. TOURGÉE.

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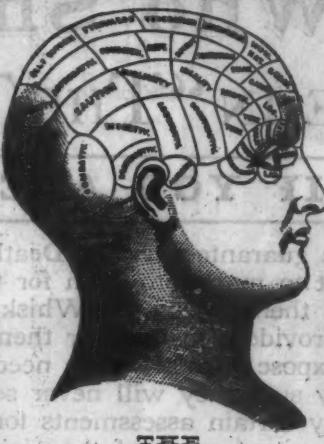
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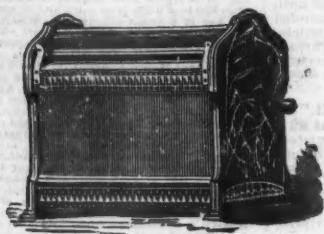
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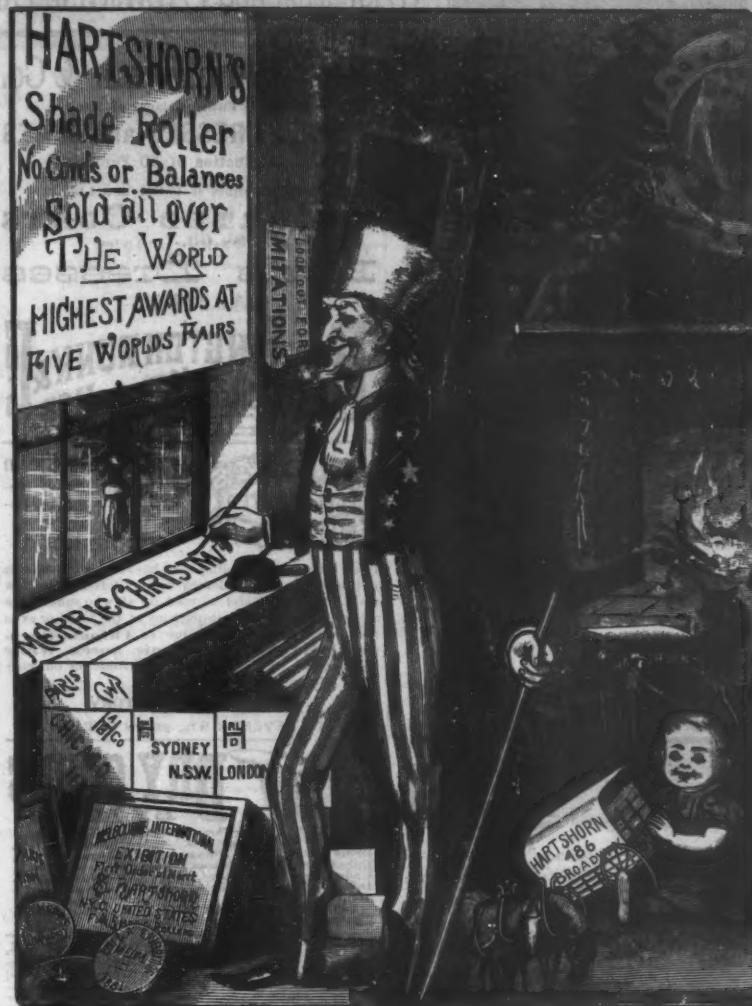
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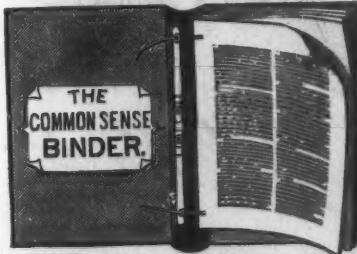
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